

AN  
*Help and Exhortation*  
TO  
Worthy Communicating.  
OR, A  
TREATISE

Describing the  
Meaning, Worthy Reception,  
Duty, and Benefits  
OF THE  
*Holy SACRAMENT.*  
AND

Answering the *Doubts of Conscience*, and  
*other Reasons*, which most generally detain Men  
from It.

Together with *Suitable*

DEVOTIONS  
ADDED.

By JOHN KETTLEWELL,  
late Vicar of Coles-hill in Warwickshire.

*The Third Edition, with large Additions,  
by the Author's own hand.*

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TO THE  
Right Honourable  
SIMON Lord DIGBY,  
BARON DIGBY  
OF  
GEASHILL.

MY LORD,

**T**HE *Holy Eucharist* is a Rite of the greatest Honour and Endearment that ever God vouchsafed to Men, and the most Sublime and Blisful Instance of our Communion with him. For therein he calls us to his own *Table*, not to attend as *Servants*, but to Feast with him as his *Friends* : He treats us with

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the most Magnificent Fare, presenting That to us for our Food, which one would think were not to be *eaten*, but *adored*, even the most Sacred *Body* and *Blood* of his own *Son*, in which he conveys to us all the Benefits of our Redemption. And being thus apt to excite in us the highest Devotion, and to enrich us with the greatest Fullness of Grace and Blessing, one would expect it should be had in Reverence, and most Thankfully Received by every Christian.

But yet in *our Days*, what part of *Religion* doth so generally suffer, or is so universally neglected among Men? For the greatest Numbers, have either little or no *Reverence* at all for it, or too much, which makes them afraid of it. They neglect it thro' Carelessness and Causeless Scruples, or prophane it by Unworthy and Disrespectful Usage? So that among all the Professors of Christianity, few pay

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pay that Honour to their Lord, or secure that Benefit to themselves by Receiving, which he intended All should do.

This, *My Lord*, is the Grief and Complaint of all, who have any Just Honour for their Dearest Saviour, and this Venerable Ordinance; or any Generous Compassion for the Souls of others. And that, by the Grace of God, I may help something to redress it, I have endeavoured to describe a *Worthy Communicating*, and to set out both the Duty and Advantages of it in this Treatise, that thereby I may recommend it to the Choice of all who are Wise, and to the Consciences of all that are Religious. In the Management whereof, I have shunn'd all Fruitless Disputes, and nice Speculations, seeking only to get it Authority among the *Loose*, and Reverence with the *Careless*, and to reconcile

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it to the *Scrupulous*, and to make the Duty as Clear, Easie, and Useful as I can to all. Particularly, I have designed all along to make it, not only an Honourable Remembrance of our Dear Lord, but a most Solemn and Strict Engagement to a Good Life in all that use it; for then I am sure they will be infinitely Happy in it.

And this Discourse, *My Noble Lord*, I here humbly Offer to Your Lordship, desiring it may stand as a publick Testimony of of the Great Honour and Affection, which I have for those Excellencies, that shine so clear in You. God has endow'd Your Great Mind, with a Strong Love, and a steady Choice of Virtue; and, what I have beheld with Pleasure, with a Generous, and, as there is Place for it, an Active Compassion for those that want it.

You

## *Dedictory.*

You have the True Wisdom, upon Deliberate and Well-studied Reasons, to be Religious; and the Courage, in this Audacious Age, when Irreligion is set up for the only Creditable Dress, to own it, and study to be thought so. For 'tis Your Lordships Honour to think, that nothing can truly make You Greater; than to be an Humble Worshipper, and a Faithful Servant of your Holy Saviour. This Noble Piety and Zeal for Goodness, will endear You, *My Lord*, to Almighty God, and to all Good Men. And if, by these Papers, I may in any wise contribute to them; I shall think my self happy, in having serv'd to set on the Vertuous Growth of one, whom, I hope, God has set out, in a Time which so infinitely needs it, for an Illustrious Example, that may give both Ornament and Support to Religion.

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But beside this, *My Lord*, I have another End in this Dedication ; and that is, That these Sheets may remain a Lasting Monument of my Gratitude, for the Endearing Favours which I have receiv'd from Your Noble Hand. They were Compos'd for the Benefit of a Place, where I am now fixed, and whereto I was design'd by Your Generosity and Nobleness, when I thought of nothing less. For so truly Publick was Your Lordships Spirit in the Filling of that Church, that You pitch'd upon a Person whose Face You had never known, and who never knew of it, only because You believed, that he would make it his Care to promote Religion, and to Benefit those Souls which were to be committed to him. And this, *My Lord*, I humbly beg Your Lordships Leave to mention, not for Your own, but for the Publick's Sake. For in this degenerate Age, when  
either

## *Dedictory.*

either Filthy Lucre, or at least some other mean and sordid End, have made a Merchandise, and bred Corruption even in the most *Sacred Trusts*, I think the World has need of such *Examples*.

I have Nothing more to add, but to beg of Almighty GOD, That he who brings about the Noblest Ends by the Weakest and most Unlikely Instruments, would make this Book effectual to his own Honour and Service; and also Bless Your Lordship, with a Continuance and Encrease, of all Virtuous Excellencies, Honour and Happiness in this World, till at last he shall take You to shine in his own Immortal Glory in the World to come. This is the most hearty Prayer of him, who very much for Your Favours, but more for the true De-

votion



## *The Epistle, &c.*

votion and Affection which You  
bear to the G O D. and S A V I-  
O U R he serves, is, in all sin-  
cerity,

*My Honoured Lord,*

*Your Lordships*

*most Affectionate,*

*From Your Lord-  
ships House near  
Coles-hill, Jun.  
37. 1683.*

*obliged Chaplain,*

*and humble Servant,*

John Kettlewell.

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humble



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AN  
H E L P  
AND  
EXHORTATION  
TO  
Worthy Communicating.

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The INTRODUCTION.

**I**N this matter of the Holy Sacrament of the *Lords Supper*, there are two great Faults which are every where incurr'd, and which all who Love their Saviour or their own Souls ought most carefully to avoid ; and they are, a *Refusal* or *Neglect*, and an *unworthy Usage* or *Prophanation* of it ; both which are most offensive to Almighty God, and to our dear Lord. For our Blessed Saviour has appointed it, and expressly commanded us to come to it, and shew'd us by manifest Tokens that he lays a particular weight upon the same, so that we are greatly undutiful and disobedient if we keep back from

it : And he has appointed it for sacred Ends and solemn purposes, which call for a very Reverent and Devout Carriage ; so that we prophane it if we come carelessly, and behave our selves unworthily when we approach thereto. It is a most *necessary* part of our Religion, and therefore not to be passed over, and let alone through Negligence ; and a most *aweful* one, and therefore not to be perform'd with disrespect, and irreverent Carriage. So that we must be careful, both to partake of this Holy Feast when we are called to it, and to come to it worthily when we do. And this St. Paul prescribes concerning it, 1 Cor. 11. *Let a man examine himself, says he, and so let him eat of that Bread and drink of that Cup.* v. 28. *Let a man examine him-*

† δοκιμαζέτω.  
† οἱ δοκιμασθέντες,  
they that are ap-  
proved may be  
made manifest.

\* ὅς ἐστιν δο-  
κιμασμένος,  
Whomsoever you  
shall approve.

self, i. e. let him approve himself, as the † Word, which here is rendered, *examine*, signifies v. † 19, & Chap. 16. v. \* 3. Let him so long try his fitness for it, till he sees cause to like and approve himself,

and to think he is worthy of the same ; for he would not call unworthy Receivers to the Sacrament, but drive them from it, as he doth by telling them the *extream danger*, which they incur thereby, v. 27,

*The Introduction.*

3

29, But when once he is so approved, and fit to come to it, then says he, let him not forbear the Feast, but hasten to partake thereof; *Let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.*

Thus are both a *careless Forbearance*, and an *indecent unworthy Usage* of this Holy Feast, great Indignities to our Blessed Lord, and criminal Violations of it. It suffers on either hand, so that to secure it in its just esteem and due observance, both are carefully to be removed. And to do what Right I can to this Holy Ordinance, and what Service I am able to all such as shall seek Help from this Treatise, I shall endeavour, what in me lies, to cure and prevent both, in that which follows.

Now to do this with the greater clearness, in Discoursing upon this Subject I shall do these five things.

1<sup>st</sup>, I shall shew *What is the meaning, of eating Bread, and drinking Wine, in the Blessed Sacrament.*

2<sup>ly</sup>, *Wherein the worthiness of doing this lies.*

3<sup>ly</sup>, *How much it is every good Christians Duty to frequent it.*

4<sup>ly</sup>, *What great inducements we have thereto, and how great the Benefits are which come by it, which should make us press to it of*



our selves, tho we were not commanded so to do.

sly, I shall consider those Excuses, and take off those Pleas, which are most usually made by any persons against coming to the same.

And when all this is done, I think I shall have said enough, both to invite, and press men to this Feast, and also to a worthy partaking thereof, that so they may come to it when they are invited, and be Welcom and Worthy Guests, when they do.

## PART. I.

*The meaning of Feasting in the Holy Sacrament.*

## CHAP. I.

*Of the meaning, of our eating and drinking in the Holy Sacrament.*

### The Contents.

*Three Ends of Feasting in the Lord's Supper.*

1. End is in Remembrance and Commemoration of our Saviour Christ, and of his dying for us. To remember him is not barely to call to mind that once there was such a Person.

Person, but to think of his particular Quality and Relation to us, which are worth remembering, as of his being our most Faithful Teacher, our most Gracious Governour, our most Intire Friend, and noble Benefactor. These things usually commemorated by Festivals. 2. End is in confirmation of the New Covenant, which he purchased for us by his Death. An account of the New Covenant. Christ's Death purchased the same: It is ratified in the Holy Sacrament, which is shown from the same thing, being done in Baptism, Circumcision, and the Passover which answered thereto: More particularly, 1. From the Words of Institution, wherein the Cup is call'd the New Covenant, and we are bid to drink of it, which was a Covenant-Rite; and the Bread is called Christ's Body, to the same intent the Paschal Lamb was, which was a Federal Conveyance of it. 2. From its being a Feast or Sacrifice, for Sacrifice is one way of Covenanting with God, and by Feasting on it we partake thereof. 3. From its conveying the particular Blessings of the New Covenant, which are not to be had otherwise, than by Federal Promises, or Performances. 3. End, is in Ratification of a League of Love and Friendship with those Brethren that Communicate with us therein, and with all others. This Chapter sum'm'd up.

**F**irst, I shall shew what is the meaning of eating Bread and drinking Wine in the Blessed Sacrament, and what we are to understand by those Actions; and think of them, when we do them. When

## 6 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I.

When we come to eat Bread and drink Wine in the Holy Sacrament, we must not come only for a Bodily refreshment, or for eating and drinking's sake: as we do to our common Food: For *this is to eat*, as St Paul says, *not discerning the Lords Body*, but as if it were bare ordinary Meat, 1 Cor. 11.29. But we must eat and drink with *special ends*, and *particular Intentions*, which may render our eating and drinking not an *ordinary Repast*, but a *Religious Feasting* upon the *Body and Blood of our Lord*. And these ends are three.

1<sup>st</sup>, In Remembrance, and Commemoration of our Saviour Christ, and of his dying for us.

2<sup>ly</sup>, In Confirmation of the New Covenant, which he purchased for us by his Death.

3<sup>ly</sup>, In Ratification of a League of Love and Friendship, with those Brethren, who Communicate with us therein, and with all others.

First, We must eat Bread and drink Wine in Remembrance, and commemoration of our Saviour Christ, and of his dying for us. By these Actions, we must be put in remembrance and call to mind our selves, and commemorate or tell it out to others, what a good Friend and Saviour Jesus Christ has been to us, and how at last he died and gave his own Hearts Blood for our sakes. And this our Blessed Lord expressly ordered, at the time of Institution;

*This*

I. Chap. I. *in the Holy Sacrament.* 7

*This do*, says he, both of the *eating Bread*, and *drinking Wine*, in remembrance of me, 1 Cor. II. 24. 25.

To Remember one, is not barely to call to mind that once there was *such a Person*; but also to think of their particular *Quality* and *Relation*, what they are to us, or what they have left with us, or what they have done for us which is worth Remembering. If we bid a *Servant* remember us, we intend that he should be mindfull of the *Commands* which we have left with him; if a *Friend*, that he should bear in mind the great *Love* and *Faithfulness*, which we have always expressed towards him; if one whom we have *highly obliged*, that he should *gratefully resent*, and think of the *kindnesses* which we have done him; or if one, lastly, *whose favour we desire*, and of whom we have requested any thing, that he would be mindful of the *Good turn* which he *promises* to do for us, or which we *ask* of him. In desiring any of these or any others, to remember us, we mean not barely that they should call to mind how once there were *such Persons* as we in being; but over and above that, that they be particularly mindful of the *Relation* wherein we stand towards them, and think of what we have done for them, what we deserve, or what we desire or expect from them. And

## 8      *The meaning of Feasting*      Part II

And this our Blessed Lord intends, when in this Holy Feast he Desires, and Commands us to remember him. He would have us think of him in all those Capacities, and reflect upon him under all those Relations, wherein he so infinitely deserves to be remembered by us: Such as are that of a *Faithful Teacher*, a *Gracious Governor*, an intire *Friend*, and noble *Benefactor*, doing the highest kindnesses, and working the greatest deliverances for us, and for all *Mankind*.

1<sup>st</sup>, He would have us remember him, as our *Faithful Teacher*, who has made known to us the whole Cōunsel of God concerning us, and to call to mind those excellent things which he has revealed to us. As namely, That for the sake of his Death, and through the merits of his Blood, all mankind, who were utter Enemies before, shall be put into a way of Reconciliation with God, and have the Benefit of a New Covenant, which proffers Pardon, to all who truly Repent of their sinns; and Spiritual help and inward Grace, to all who are careful to endeavour therewith; and the Blessings of Heaven and endless Happiness to all that are entirely obedient; promising, that at our Death, our Souls shall go into Paradise, and that at the General Judgment, our  
Bodies,

Chap. I. *in the Holy Sacrament.* 3

Bodies, which till then were held in their Graves; shall be raised up again to eternal Life.

2<sup>ly</sup>. He would have us remember him, as our *Gracious Governor*, whom God has anointed to give Laws to us; and to recollect and bear in mind those Commands, which, as our Sovereign Lord and Master, he has laid upon us. As namely, That we love God, and trust in his Goodness, and submit to his Providence, and Worship him with Prayers and Praises, but above all with an holy and a God-like Life; that we be Humble and Heavenly-minded, Chast, Temperate and Contented; that we be dutiful to our Governors, respectful to our Superiours, courteous to our Equals, condescending to our inferiours, grateful to our Friends, loving and obliging to our Enemies, and just, charitable, and peaceable towards all persons, of whatsoever Nations, Sects or Parties, even to all Mankind.

3<sup>ly</sup>. He would have us remember him, as our *most entire Friend*, and noble Benefactor, who let us so deep into his Heart, and heaped his Favours on us at so prodigious a rate, as never was, nor ever will be equall'd. For he loved us, without any thing of our own Deserts; and in spite of our highest provocations;  
and

10 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I.

and without expecting any other recompence, besides the pleasure of being kind to us: and to such a degree, as made him to forego the greatest pleasures which he might have held without all interruption in Heavenly places, and to become a man of Sorrows, and to lead a persecuted, difficult, and necessitous Life; and at last to die a most exquisitely painful, and ignominious Death for our sakes, which ransom'd us from the greatest Curse, and procured us the most valuable Blessings that our Nature can admit of. And this benefit of his Death, being not only in it self the costliest, but the very price and purchase of all the rest, he would have remembered above all others in this Feast; and accordingly he has suited the Food therein, to be broken Bread, and Wine poured out, which do most lively represent it. *As often as you eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, saith the Apostle, you exhibit to all who look on and observe what you do, or shew forth the Lords Death till he come,* 1 Cor. 11. 26.

These are the things, which our Saviour Christ calls us seriously to remember and consider of in our own minds, and which the Actions themselves commemorate and shew forth to others, when we  
eat

Chap. I. *in the Holy Sacrament.* 11

eat Bread and drink Wine in this holy Sacrament. When we partake of this Feast, which he has appointed us, he would have us remember him, and think with our selves how *Faithful a Teacher* he was to us, and what good Lessons and Declarations he has left with us ; how *Gracious a Lord* and Master he proved, and what Commandments he has laid upon us ; and lastly, how *kind a Friend* and *noble Benefactor* he shewed himself, and what astonishing kindnesses he has done for us in all the Labours of his Life, but especially and above all in his suffering a bloody Death for our sakes, which purchased for us the Forgiveness of our Sins, the Grace and Spirit of God, and Eternal happiness. All this *Faithful Teacher*, and *Gracious Governor*, and *entire Friend*, and *noble Benefactor*, the Blessed Jesus is, and has approved himself to us, in the highest Measures, and to all imaginable Degrees ; and since he is so, he would have us to bear it in mind, and oftentimes to think of it. And that we may be sure to do so, he has instituted this Feast on purpose for it, and told us, that our work is to call him to mind, and remember him whensoever we come to it.

And this way of having these things remembred by appointing Feasts for the  
Com-



Chap. I. in the Holy Sacrament. 13

Comemoration of them, has been very usual in the World. Thus

† Πολλῶν γὰρ  
εἰσι φιλοσόφων ἐν  
ᾧ σὺ σῴσθαι, καὶ  
μὲν Διογηνῶν,  
καὶ δὲ Ἀντιπα-  
τρίων, λευκάνων,  
καὶ δὲ Πενταπ-  
ταῶν. Athen.

Deipn. l. 5. c. 1.

Diogenisæ, Anti-  
patrisæ, Panætia-  
sæ appellati sunt,  
qui statō anni Die  
Diogenis, Antipa-  
tri, & Panætii no-  
bilium Philosopho-  
rum memoriā cu-  
lebrarent. H. Ca-  
saub. ad loc. Ani-  
madv. c. 1.

the † Disciples, in the se-  
veral Sects of Phyloso-  
phers at *Athens*, were  
wont to have a set Feast  
and Collation, in remem-  
brance of their Founders.  
And it has been the way  
of all the World, to re-  
member their Benefact-  
ors, and commemorate  
some great Blessings, by  
Festivals. Thus at this  
day we comemorate the  
deliverance from the  
*Powder Treason*, and the  
*Kings happy Restauration*,

by a yearly Festival up-

on that occasion. And the whole *Christian Church* has perpetuated the memory of  
*Christs Nativity, Resurrection*, and the *De-  
scend of the Holy Ghost*, by the yearly Feasts  
of *Christmas, Easter*, and *Pentecost*. And  
God himself in the Old Testament call'd  
men to a remembrance of the *Creation  
of the World*, by the Feast of the *Seventh  
day Sabbath*; and all the *Jews* to the  
commemoration of his sparing all their  
*First Born*, when the destroying Angel  
slew all the *First-Born of Egypt*, by the  
yearly

## 12 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I.

yearly Festival of the *Passover* appointed for that very purpose, *Exod. 12. 14.*

This then is the first end of our eating Bread and drinking Wine at the Lords Table, it is *in remembrance of our Saviour Christ, and of what he has done for us.* So that when we partake in this Feast of his appointment, we must seriously reflect on him who has appointed it, and bethink our selves, that he is our Faithful Teacher calling to mind his Revelations; our Sovereign Lord and Master, remembring his Commandments; our intire Friend, Saviour, and Benefactor, who has done strange things for us, but above all, who has laid down his own Life to purchase for us the Pardon of our Sins, and Spiritual Grace, and Eternal Happiness, upon our true Repentance, Obedience and Virtuous Endeavours. With these Thoughts he would have us, to entertain our *Minds*, at the same time that we Feast our Bodies with the Creatures of Bread and Wine, which he has prepared for us: and if we would answer his End in it, and be welcome Guests at this Feast, when he calls us to it, we must be sure so to do,

And as we must eat Bread and drink Wine at the Lords Table, in remembrance of our Saviour Christ, and of his dying for us; so must we,

2ly, *In*

## 14 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I.

2ly. *In Confirmation of the New Covenant, which he hath purchased and procured for us by his Death.*

This Covenant is a mutual contract and ingagement between God and us; and consists of several Articles agreed to on Gods side, and several on ours. As for Gods part, to all True Believers, i. e. to all who believe the Holy Scriptures, and particularly that part of them, these his gracious promises, without a belief wherof they will have no list or encouragement to set about the performance of the Conditions required on their parts: to all true Believers, I say, he promises three Things, viz. the forgiveness of Sins, the Assistance of his Spirit, and Eternal Happiness. Answerably on their Parts, they promise three more, which three indeed are Summ'd up in one, i. e. the last of them: and those are, to Repent of their Sins, to endeavour with his Grace, and to obey all his Commandments.

He promises to forgive them all their Sins. For this is one Article of the New Covenant, as the Apostle relates it, *Heb. 8. This is the Covenant which I will make with them in those days, I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more, v. 10, 12.* But then at the same time he expects, and accordingly they promise, that they will Repent of

I. Chap. I. *in the Holy Sacrament.* 15

*of them, and forsake them. For he orders Repentance and Remission of Sins to be preach'd both together. Luc. 24. That Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name to all Nations, v. 47; and tells us expressly, That except we repent, we shall all perish, Luc. 13. 3.*

He Promises them the assistance of his Spirit, to enable them that they may do his Will, and become obedient. For this also is reckoned as another Article of the Covenant made with Abraham, that he would grant unto us the Power to serve him in Holiness and Righteousness all the days of our Lives Luc. 1. 72, 73, 74, 75: and the great Promise of the Gospel is, that God will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him Luc. 11. 13. But then he expects, and accordingly they promise, that they will use and improve his Grace, whensoever it is intrusted with them and endeavour after all Virtues as they stand in need of them, God works in us both to will and to do, says St. Paul, when we join with him, and work out our own Salvation, Phil. 2. 12, 13: and 'tis only to him that hath, saith our Saviour, i. e. to him that hath improved the Talents which were bestowed upon him, as those Good Servants had done, who had gain'd the one † five, the other \* two Talents with them, that more shall be given, and he

† v. 20.

\* v. 22

shall

16 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I.

*shall have abundance; but from him that hath not, i. e. hath not improved what he had received, as the Wicked Servant had not done, who went and † hid it, † v. 25. shall be taken away even that which he hath, Mat. 25. 29.*

And that this is Gods ordinary Rule where he intrusts any thing, he expressly declares again upon another occasion, *Luc. 19. 26.*

He promises them, lastly, *Eternal Life and Happiness.* This, says St. John, is the Promise which he hath Promised us, even *Eternal Life.* 1. John 2. 25. But then he expects, and at the same time we promise, that we will obey all his Laws, and do every thing which he requires of us. For Christ is become the Author of *Eternal Salvation*, says the Apostle, to those only that obey him, *Heb. 5. 9.* and blessed are they that do his Commandments, says S. John, for they only have Right to the Tree of Life, *Rev. 22. 14.*

So that the New Covenant, is a mutual Contract and Ingagement between God and Men, wherein he promises to all, who truly Believe, and accordingly they accept it, that he will forgive them all their Sins when they sincerely Repent of them, and help them to any Graces when they carefully concur with him and endeavour after them, and give them *Eternal Life* after they have intirely obeyed him.

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him. He promises Pardon, Inward Grace, and Everlasting Happiness: but then they, having Faith or Belief already, without an actual Exercise, whereof they would not seek after this Covenant, nor, if they did, could be admitted to it, make Promise to him again of Repentance, Virtuous Endeavours, and an intire Obedience, which must confer a Claim, and give them Right thereto.

This is the New Covenant, and this Christs Bloody Death has purchased and procured for us. God would not dispense with the *First* Covenant, without a Ransom that might remove all Hindrances, by securing the Honour of his Holiness, and utterly discouraging all future offences, and satisfying all the ends of Justice: and because that could not otherwise be so well effected, as he thought fit it should, Christ himself became an *expiatory Sacrifice*, and, by dying for it, obtained the *Second*. And for this Cause, it is called the New Covenant in his Blood, *i. e.* that Covenant which was confirmed and purchased by it. *This*, says he, *is the New Testament*, or rather, the New † Covenant in my † ΚΑΥΝΗ ΣΑ-  
BLOOD, 1 Cor. 11. 25. ΔΙΝΗ.

Now this Covenant, which is the purchase of Christs Death, and which is the  
Sum

18 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I.

Sum and Substance of all that he has got for us, we all entred into at first when we were *Baptized*. For *Baptism* is our *Sealing of this Covenant*, and *stipulating* or *engaging* to make good these Terms to Almighty God; *Baptism*,

\* 1 Pet. 3. 21.

† *Emptima*.

says St. \* Peter, is the Answer, or † *Stipulation of a good Conscience towards*

God; i. e. it is the *Federal Promise*, or *undertaking* thereof, which every Person makes when he is *Baptized*. And this is plain, from that *form of the Baptismal Vow*, which the *Primitive Christians* used, and which we use now at present, wherein, if they are *grown Persons*, they *themselves*, or if *Children*, their *God-fathers* and *God-mothers* in their Names do expressly *covenant* and *ingage* for that *Faith*, *Repentance* or *Renouncing* of all Sins, and *Obedience* to Gods Laws, which are required by it.

And as we *first entred* into this *Covenant*, when we were *Baptized*; so are we called to *renew* and *confirm* the same, every time we are invited to *sup* with our Blessed Lord, in this *Holy Sacrament*. When he *Summons* us to eat Bread, and Drink Wine in Remembrance of his Death at this Feast; he calls us withal to confirm the *New Covenant*, which his Death has procured, and which was  
the

Chap. I. in the Holy Sacrament. 19

the price and purchase of it. He invites us to receive Ingements from God of his promised Mercies, and to give him engagements of our Duty and Service: to be assured by him, that, if we do believe the Holy Scriptures, he will forgive us all our Sins upon our Repentance, and give his Grace and Spirit to our endeavours, and make us eternally happy upon our obedience; and to assure him, that we do so believe, and are resolv'd so to repent, endeavour, and obey, that so by virtue of his Gracious Promise, we may have Right thereto. He intends our eating and drinking at his Table, as a *Federal Rite*, and for a Renewal and Ratification of this League of Love and Friendship: So that at the same time when we eat and drink in Remembrance of Christs Death which procured the Covenant, we must solemnly give our own Consent to it, and expressly ratifie and confirm it too.

This may fairly be presumed to be one End of the Holy Communion, because it is the end of *Baptism*, which St. Peter calls a † *Stipulation*, † *Pet. 3. 22.* and which, as we have seen, is our entrance into the *Gospel-Covenant and Religion*. And since it is so evidently the use of that, in great likelihood it is of this too; for both the



20 *The meaning of Feasting* · Part I.

Sacraments were still held of like Use, Nature, and Signification.

Nay, this was the End, not only of the *Christian*, but also of the *Jewish Sacraments*, which shews that it was not peculiar to any one, but runs through all Sacraments.

For as for *Circumcision*, it was a Federal Rite or Sign. It bonnd the *Jews* ( as before it had done the *Patriarchs*, ) to God, and God to them, in the *Covenant* which *Moses* gave them, by a mutual obligation. For therein they promised to perform, all that the *Law* injoined---He that is *Circumcised*, says St. Paul, is a Debtor to keep the whole Law, Gal. 5. 3. And thereby they were assured of the *Righteousness* and *Benefits* which God had promised---Abraham received *Circumcision*, as a Seal of the *Righteousness of Faith*, says the same Apostle, i. e. as a Seal or Confirmation of the Promises which were made to it, Rom. 4. 11. And because it was thus a Sign to both Parties, and a Rite used at their engaging in it, *Circumcision* is call'd the *Covenant*, i. e. the Solemn Ceremony and undertaking thereof, Gen. 17. 10. Act. 7. 8.

Aed then as for the *Passover*, it also was a *Covenantee* Ceremony and Federal Rite, as may sufficiently appear from its being a *Feast on Sacrifice*, which is the most Solemn

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lemn way of *Covenanting* with God. And this use of the *Passover*, is of the greater weight to conclude the same of the *Lords Supper*, because among us this answers to it, and comes instead thereof. It answers to it, I say; for our *bleeding Lord* was the Great thing, which their *Sacrificed Lamb* was set to signifie, whence he is called *the* † *Lamb without blemish and without Spot, the* \* † *1 Pet. 1. 19. Rev. 13. 8.* *Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World, and the* † † *Joh. 1. 29.* *Lamb of God that takes away the sins of Mankind*; and our *Feasting* upon his *Body* and *Blood*, is the same with their *Feasting* upon the *Body* of the *Paschal Lamb*, as St. Paul plainly intimates, when he says *Christ our Passover is Sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep our Encharistical Feast* upon him in our *Passover*, answerable to what they did upon the *Lamb* in theirs, 1 Cor. 5. 7, 8. And at the Institution of the Holy Sacrament, our Saviour intimated that the *Passover* was abolish'd, and that this was henceforward to succeed and come instead of it. For immediately before he appointed his own *Supper*, he tells them that he would not any more eat of the *Lamb*, or drink of the *Wine* in the *Passover*; i. e. he would abolish this, so as we should no more eat or drink of it.

22 *The meaning of Feasting Part. I*  
and substitute that in its place; *Luc. 22.*  
*16, 18.*

And now, since 'tis the general Nature of Sacraments, both among Jews and Christians, to be Covenanting Rites; since Baptism plainly is, which goes hand in hand with it; and since the Passover was, which preceded and answered to it, this being substituted in place, and put instead thereof: In all likelihood, the Sacrament of the Lords Supper is a Federal Feast and a Covenanting Rite too.

But to prove this yet more particularly. That this Holy Sacrament is intended for a Federal Rite, and for our Renewal and Ratification of the New Covenant, will appear,

1<sup>st</sup>, From the words of Institution, wherein the Cup is call'd the New Covenant, and we are bid to drink of it, which is a Federal Rite.

In the words of Institution, the Cup, is call'd the New Covenant: This Cup, says our Saviour, is the New  
† διαθήκη. Testament, or † Covenant in my Blood, 1 Cor. 11. 25.

And we are all bid to drink thereof, which is a Federal Rite, and was then a known Ceremony of confirming any Covenant. Drink ye all of it, says he to his Disciples, *Mat. 26. 27.*

This

Chap. 1. *in the Holy Sacrament.* 23

This drinking of it, as it is an Application of it to our selves, and taking it into our own Bodies, is a plain Sign of our ingaging in the same; for thereby we shew, that we close with it, and embrace it. But this is still further evident, because anciently among the *Jews*, and other *Eastern Nations*, eating and drinking were *Federal Rites*, whereby they were wont mutually to Seal *Leagues of friendship*, and confirm *Covenants* with each other. For they used to bind their *Compacts* by a *Friendly Treat*, and to consummate them in an *Hospitable Entertainment*. Thus we read in the Story of *Laban and Jacob*: for when *Laban* demands, *Come thou, let us make a Covenant, I and thou*; Gen. 31. 44. *Jacob's* Consent to it is expressed by this, — *he said unto his Brethren, Gather stones*; and *they took stones, and made an heap, and did eat there upon the heap*; by that Note of *Friendship* answering the Demand, and confirming the Covenant which was proposed, v. 46. And so *Joshua's* Covenanting, or making Peace with the *Gibeonites* when they came to sue for it, is called his *taking of their Victuals*, Josh. 9. — *the Men took of their Victuals, and asked not counsel of the Lord, and Joshua made Peace with them, and made a League with*

## 24 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I

*them to let them live, Josh. 9. 14, 15. And Obadiab mentions being in Covenant with any one, and Eating Bread with him, as Words which signifie the same Thing, and one whereof is an Explication of the other. The men of thy Confederacy have brought thee even to the Border, says he, i. e. have almost quite bereft thee of thy own Country; the Men that are at Peace with thee, have deceived thee; they that eat thy Bread, have laid a Wound under thee: in which Description of the Enemies of Edom, tho' there be Variety in the Expressions, yet 'tis one and the same Thing meant, which is by them, Obad. v. 7. And the same might appear from other Instances, both in the Holy Scriptures, and in Prophane Authors.*

Since in the Words of Institution then our Saviour tells his Disciples, that the Cup is the *New Covenant*, and bids them drink of it, which was well known among them to be a *Federal Rite*; he plainly shew'd his meaning to be, that they should ratifie and confirm *the New Covenant* thereby.

2ly, This appears from its being a *Feast upon Sacrifice*, which is a *Federal Feast*; for *Sacrifice* is one way of Covenant with God; and by Feasting on the Sacrifice, we join therein, and partake of it.

The

The *Lord's Supper*, I say, is a Feast upon Sacrifice. It was the way both among Jews and Gentiles, when they brought an Offering to God, that they who offered it should come and Feast on some part of their offering. Thus it was in the Worship of the Golden Calf, and the Sacrifice which Aaron made to it, *Exod. 32.* He built an Altar before it, and offered Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings; and the People sat down to Eat and to Drink, i. e. upon part of what they had offered, *v. 5, 6.* And thus it was in the Sacrifice with Samuel blessed, *1 Sam. 9.* The People will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the Sacrifice, and afterwards they eat that he bidden, *v. 13.* And to this Usage several Places of the Scripture allude, as namely *Psal. 106. 28.* — They joyned themselves unto Baal-Peor, and ate the Sacrifices of the Dead: And *Exod. 34. 15,* — Lest thou do Sacrifice unto their Gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his Sacrifice: And several others. And as it was thus in the Religious Feasts both of Jews and Gentiles, so is it also in the *Lord's Supper.* Our Saviour gave his Body and Blood as a Sacrifice for our Sins, Putting away Sin, as the Apostle says, by the Sacrifice of himself, *Heb. 9. 26.* And having thus made the Oblation, according to what was in use

## 26 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I.

both in the *Jewish* and *Gentile* Sacrifices, he institutes this Treat of Bread and Wine, as a Feast upon it. This I suppose is aim'd at, when St. Paul brings in an Altar, speaking of the *Christian Feast*, which sufficiently intimates its relation to a *Sacrifice*, as a Treat upon it: *We have an Altar*, says he, *whereof they have no right to eat that serve the Tabernacle, i. e.* wherein the strict Judaizers may not partake; for Judaism excludes Men from the Communion especially, and indeed from all Parts of the Christian Worship, *Heb. 13. 10.* And this he also shews concerning the same, when he compares it with the *Jewish* and *Gentile Feasts on Sacrifices*, making them answerable and parallel thereto, *1 Cor. 10. 16, 18, 20, 21.* And this he directly affirms of it, when he says, *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the Eucharistical Feast, i. e.* upon this Sacrificed Christ, *1 Cor. 5. 7, 8.*

And *Feasts upon Sacrifice* are Federal Feasts, *i. e.* Feasts which ratifie and confirm Covenants; for *Sacrifice* is one way of Covenanting with God, and Feasting upon the Sacrifice is the way of participating or sharing in it.

*Sacrifice*, I say, is one way of Covenanting with God. When God would enter into Articles, and bind himself in Cove-

Cove-

Chap. I. *in the Holy Sacrament.* 27

Covenant with Men, he chose to do it in shedding the Blood of some Sacrifice that Typified the Blood of Christ his Son, which is the only thing that moves him to deal with us in any Concern that either implies or tends to Friendship and Reconciliation. Thus he did with *Abraham* when he promised him the Land of *Canaan*, if he would continue † perfect, and walk † Gen. 17. 1, 2. before him; he ordered him to make a *Sacrifice*, that therein he might covenant and engage it to him. *Take an Heifer, says he, and a She-Goat, and a Ram, &c. And Abraham took them, and divided them in the midst, and when the Sun went down, behold a smoaking Furnace, and a burning Lamp that passed between those pieces, wherein 'tis like, God consumed and Feasted on Abraham's Sacrifice; and in that same day the Lord made a Covenant with Abraham, saying, Unto thy Seed have I given this Land, &c. Gen. 15. 8, 9, 10, 17, 18. And thus he did with the Jewish Nation, when he ratified the Mosaick Covenant with them; chusing the Blood of Burnt-offerings, that therein he might seal it to them. For when Moses told the People all the words of the Lord, and they answered with one Voice, saying, We will do them; he built an Al-*



## 28 *The meaning of Feasting* Part. 1.

tar of twelve Pillars, according to the twelve Tribes, and offered Burnt offerings and Peace-offerings, and then recited the Book of the Covenant in their ears, that they might give their Assent to it in the Solemnity of this Sacrifice; the Blood whereof is therefore called *the Blood of the Covenant*, because the Covenant was thus solemnly entred, and established thereby, *Exod.* 24. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. And thus he did in other Compacts, but particularly in *all those* wherein he promised Pardon of sin; for without shedding of Blood, *i. e.* of some Sacrifice, says the Apostle, there is no Remission, *Heb.* 9. 22. Thus did God, in all Contracts of Pardon and Reconciliation, require the blood of some Sacrifice, that therein he might ratifie and confirm the same. And this was the great use, where-to all Sacrifices of Expiation, (such as our Saviour Christs is in most signal manner, whereon we Feast in the Lords Supper) served among the *Jews*; they were solemn Compacts and Stipulations, wherein he promised pardon, and they Amendment, after any Offences. He ingaged to accept the life of the sacrificed beast in lieu of theirs, and to exempt them because it had suffered; and they engaged to amend the fault which they sought thereby to have attoned, and never more to repeat it. This 'tis plain

plain they did, from that *Form of Penitential Confession* in use among them, when they brought an *Expiatory Sacrifice* to the Lord: †  
*O Lord! I have sinned, and dealt wickedly, and rebelled against thee in doing this or that; now I am sorry for it, and am ashamed of it, and will never return to it any more; and therefore beg that this Sacrifice may atone for it.* And if they had

† Obsecro Domine, peccavi, deliqui, rebellavi, hoc aut illud feci, nunc autem penitentiam ago, sitque hæc hostia expiatio mea Vi. *Episcop. Injst. t. 3. c. 3. ad Præp. 35. & Outr. de Sac. c. 15.*

not thus repented of it, the † Sacrifice would have been of no avail to the Forgiveness thereof. For, to what purpose is the multitude of your Sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord, so long as you shew no Repentance with them? But wash you, make you clean, cease to do evil, learn to do well: Come now, and let us reason together; tho' your Sins be as Scarlet they shall be as white as Snow, *Ha. i. 11, 16, 17, 18.* The Sacrifices of God, says the Psalmist, are a broken Spirit, i. e. they must be offered and presented with it; a broken and a contrite Heart, O God, thou wilt not despise, *Pf. 51. 17.*

† *Isa. 66. 3.*

Thus

### 30 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I

Thus were *Sacrifices* a *mutual Stipulation* and *Engagement*, consisting of a *promise of Pardon on Gods part*, and of a *promise of Repentance and Amendment on Adams*: so that they were in the nature of a *virtual Contract* and *Covenant*, between them. And this God plainly intimates concerning them, when he tells of his *Saints* making a *Covenant with him by Sacrifice*: — *Gather my Saints*, saith he, *who have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice*, Pl. 50. 5. and calls *Salt*, wherewith every *Oblation of Meat-offering* was to be seasoned, the *Salt of the Covenant*; because it was to season all those *Sacrifices* wherein the *Covenant* was confirmed, *Levit. 2. 13.*

And as *Sacrifice* is one way of *Covenanting with God*, so is *Feasting upon the Sacrifice* the way of *sharing and partaking in it*. He who joyned in the *Feast*, was looked upon by God himself to joyn also in the *Offering*, to *promise* all the *Duty* which it engaged, and to *partake* in all the  *blessings* which it procured for them. *They which eat of the Sacrifice*, says *St. Paul*, are *partakers of the Altar*, 1 Cor. 10. 18. And therefore he fordid them to join in the *Gentile Feasts*, where they sacrificed to *Devils*, because that were to *partake and have fellowship with Devils*, V. 20, 21.

And thus, from this also, viz. the *Lords Supper*

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Supper being a Feast on Sacrifice, it appears to be a Federal Rite, because Sacrifice is the great way of Covenanting with God, and by Feasting on the Sacrifice, we join in the same, and partake of it. In eating Bread and drinking Wine at the Lords Table, agreeable to what the Jews and Gentiles did at their Religious Feasts, we feed on the Sacrifice of Christ; and that Sacrifice confirmed the New Covenant with Almighty God, that being as he says, sealed † in his blood, † 1 Cor. I 1.25. so that by our Feasting on it we are made to share therein, and give our full Consent thereto.

3ly, That our Eating and Drinking at the Lord's Table is a Covenant-Rite, appears from all the particular blessings of the Covenant being conveyed by it, which are not to be had otherwise than by Federal Promises and Performances.

The particular Blessings promised in the Covenant, I say, are all conveyed by it. Our Saviour tells us of the Bread which we eat, and of the Wine which we drink, that they are his Body and Blood: --- This is my Body says he, and this is my Blood of the new Testament, Mat. 26. 26, 28. By which, altho' we are not to understand that they are so in their Natures, yet the least we can understand is, that they are so in

### 32 *The meaning of Feasting* Part. I.

in their *Effects*, i. e. that they convey to us all those Blessings, which the piercing of his Body, and the shedding of his Blood, procured for us. Those blessings are contained in the New Covenant, and, as I said, are chiefly these *three*, viz. the *Forgiveness of our Sins*, the *Assistance of God's Holy Spirit* to aid and strengthen us, and *Eternal Life and Happiness*: and all these the Eating of Bread and Drinking Wine in the Holy Sacrament, are designed to convey to us.

They convey to us the *Forgiveness of our Sins*, and assure us, when we perform them as we ought, that God is in Favour and at Peace with us. Of this we have sufficient Assurance, because we *Feast upon a Sacrifice*, which is Gods Meat, and are entertained at his own Table, as *his Guests* whom he has invited: and the least which that can mean is, that he admits us into a State of Love and Friendliness, since we do not invite those whom we will not be Friends withall to our own Tables. When any one calls another to a Friendly Treat, it is a plain Sign, that he either *would be, or is, or at least makes show of being reconciled*. It is a most Natural Sign, and now every where is, and always was a Note of Friendship and Endearment. And as such the Scriptures are wont to speak of it.

When

Chap. I. *in the Holy Sacrament.* 33

When those whom he *had shut out*, should knock at the door to be let in, and claim Acquaintance; our Saviour tells us, that they will say to him, *We have eaten and drunk in thy presence*, Luc. 13. 25. 26. And when he shews his *Apostles* how high Favour, and what great interest they shall have with him, he tells them, that they shall eat and drink at his Table in his Kingdom, Luc. 22. 29, 30. And when he declares how kind he will be to those that bear his voice, and open unto him, he says, he will come in and sup with them, and they with him, Rev. 3. 20. So that when God entertains us at his own Table, and invites us to feast with him, as he doth in the *Holy Communion*; we may be sure, if we come worthily as we ought, that he is in Friendship with us, and ready to forgive us all our Sins. And this our Saviour plainly intimates, when he tells us at the giving of the Blessed Cup, that it is † *his Blood shed* † Mat. 26. 28 *for the remission of sins*; and \* verse 27. when he bids us \* *drink of it*, that so we may have it in our selves, and be assured that we have received the Atonement. And this we must observe, is a Privilege, which God never vouchsafed to the *Jews*, no not to the *Priests* themselves: for in all their *Sacrifices*, he would

### 34 *The meaning of Feasting* Part. I.

would never give them the *Blood of Expiation*, to assure them of their Sins being atoned by it, (nay, nor the *Flesh* neither in the *Great Sacrifice of Expiation*, which was burnt \* without the Camp)

\* *Lev. 16. 27.* but ordered it always to be

*Heb. 13. 11.* poured out upon the Altar, or the Ground, *Exod. 29.*

*12. Lev. 4. 25, 30, 34.* And to this, 'tis like, *St. Paul* may have respect, when he tells the *Hebrews*, that we have an Altar whereof they have no right to eat, who serve the Tabernacle, *Heb. 13. 10, 11.*

They convey to us also the Assistance of Gods Holy Spirit and Grace, to aid and strengthen us. This is intimated by our Saviour Christ, when he calls his *Flesh*, which all must eat (i.e. not in its *Natural Substance*, but in its *Effects*, or those Blessings which were purchased, by it) by the Name of

*Bread*, which is a thing

\* *Pf. 104. 15.* that, as the \* *Psalmist* says, strengthens mans heart, and

gives Nourishment and Support to us. I am the living Bread, says he, which came down from Heaven: If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever; and the Bread which I will give, is my *Flesh*, which I will give for the Life of the World: *Joh. 6. 51.*

In the Sacrament, we are called to eat Christs *Flesh*, and to drink his *Blood*, (not

Chap. I. *in the Holy Sacrament.* 35

in their Natural Substances, as I have hinted, but in their Effects :) and *he that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, saith he, dwelleth in me, and I in him*; and when Christ dwells in any Man, his Spirit dwells there too, so that he cannot want Grace sufficient to assist him, *Job. 6. 56.* And St. Paul alluding to the Power of Wine, whose Natural Virtue is to enspirit and enliven Men, says, That in the Eucharist *we are all made to drink into one Spirit, i. e. we are all made to share in the same Holy Spirit, which is the same to our Souls that a Draught of Wine is to our Bodies, a Principle of New Life, Strength, and Vigour in us, 1 Cor. 12. 13.*

They convey to us, lastly, a *Right and Title to Eternal Life and Happiness*, The Blessed Sacrament was thought *anciently* to have a peculiar Efficacy in preparing our Bodies for an immortal State. Thus

*Irenæus* says of it: \* *As the Bread that springs from the Earth, after it is blessed is not Common Bread, but the Eucharist, consisting of an Earthly*

\* *Quemadmodum enim qui est a terra panis percipiens invocationem Dei, jam non Communis panis est, sed Eucharistia,*

*ex duabus rebus constans, terrena & celesti: sic & corpora nostra percipientia Eucharistiam, jam non sunt corruptibilia, spem resurrectionis habentia. Iren. l. 4. adv. Har. c. 34.*



# 36 The meaning of Feasting Part

and an Heavenly Part, i. e. the Sensible Sign and the Spiritual Thing signified; so our Bodies receiving the Communion, are not now corruptible as they were before, but are put in hope of a Resurrection. And St. Ignatius

† Ενα ἄρτον κλῶν-  
τες, ὅς ἐστι φάρμα-  
κον ἀθανασίας, ἀν-  
τιδοτέον μὴ θαν-  
σαιν, ἀλλὰ ζῆν  
ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ  
διὰ πάντες. Ignat.  
Ep. ad Ephes.

calls it † the Medicine of Immortality, which is an Antidote to preserve Men from Dying, and give them a Life that is everlasting. And to this, as 'tis now unlike, the Prayer at the giving of the Bread and

Wine refers, That they may preserve our Souls and Bodies to everlasting Life, as it was long since in the Form of the Western Church, and as it is still in use amongst us. But whatever becomes of that Conceit, viz. its preparing our Bodies for it; 'tis plain that a Right to Life and Immortality is thereby conferred on us. Whoso eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, saith our Saviour, hath Eternal Life, and I will raise him up at the last day, Joh. 6. 54. and again, He that eateth of this Bread shall live for ever, v. 58. And if he had not in express Words declared it, in all Equity and Reason this might most justly have been presumed. For since in this Holy Sacrament God gives us the Body and Blood of his own Son, than which nothing can be

Chap. I. *in the Holy Sacrament.* 37

be dearer to him; we may justly argue as St. Paul doth, and say, *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up, both for, and to us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* Rom. 8. 32.

Thus are all the *Particular Blessings* of the *New Covenant*, which Christs Blood has purchased, and which God has promised and made over to us therein, conveyed to us in this Holy Sacrament. And since they are so, it must needs be a *Federal Rite*, and a *Solemn Ceremony* of our *Covenanting* with God; because these Blessings are not to be had otherwise, than by *Federal Performances* and *Engagements*. God has suspended all these Benefits upon our Performance of certain Conditions: so that we cannot have them conveyed to us on his part, otherwise than by undertaking at the same time, for these on our own. He will not forgive any Believers their *Sins*, unless they repent of them; nor help them to any *Graces*, unless they *endeavour* after them; nor reward them at last with *Eternal Life*, unless they have *intirely obeyed* him, as we have already seen. And therefore wheresoever *those* are bestowed, *these* are either actually performed, or sincerely promised that they shall be performed too.

So

### 38 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I

So that from this Reason also, it appears, that the *Sacrament* is a *Federal Rite*, and a *Ratification* of the *New Covenant*, and of our *Baptismal Engagements*, because all the *Blessings* of that *Covenant* are conveyed thereby, which are not to be had otherwise, than by *Federal Performances* or *Engagements*.

And thus we see, upon all these accounts, that the *Sacrament* of the *Lord Supper* is intended not only for a *Remembrance* of the *Death* of *Christ*, but also for a *Renewal* and *Ratification* of the *New Covenant* which was purchased by it. For so much the *General Nature* of *Sacraments* which are *Covenant-Rites* of *Baptism*, which goes hand in hand with it, and of the *Pastor* which preceded and answered to it do fairly intimate; and so much also the *Words* of *institution* do declare, and its being a *Feast* on *Sacrifice* infers, and its conveying all the *Blessings* of the *Covenant* do prove concerning it.

And this is the *Second End* of our *Eating Bread*, and *Drinking Wine* in the *Holy Sacrament*; namely, to *renew* our *Baptismal Vow*, and in most solemn form to *confirm* the *New Covenant* with *Almighty God*. So that when we come to remember our *Saviour Christ* in this *Feast* we must come also to give and receive

Engage

Chap. I. *in the Holy Sacrament.* 39

Engagements with our Blessed Lord, promising that we will believe all his Words, and endeavour after all Vertues, and obey all his Holy Laws, and repent of all our Sins: and then hoping assuredly that his Mercy shall forgive us, that his Grace and Spirit shall assist us, and that his Bounty shall reward us with Eternal Happiness when we do.

But besides these Ends of its being in Remembrance of Christ, and of his Dying for us, and in confirmation of the New Covenant which was purchased by his Death; there is yet another,

3dly, And that is, in Ratification of a League of Love and Friendship with those Brethren who Communicate with us, and with all others.

Eating and Drinking together at the same Table, and joyning in the same Feast, was always a Note of Friendship, and a Profession of Love and Kindness among Men. It is the common way of the World, to compose Differences, to keep up Friendliness in Neighbourhoods, and to beget Endearment and mutual Love in all Fraternities. And the same our Saviour intended it should be amongst us. He invites us all to eat of the same Loaf, and to Feast at the same Table, that we may mutually embrace as Friends, and love as Brethren,

40 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I

Brethren, and be knit together in the same Fellowship and Communion. *We being many*, says St. Paul, *are one Bread, and one Body*, for in the Sacrament *we are all Partakers of that one Bread*, which is a firm Bond of Union to make us one also 1 Cor. 10. 17. It links us together by the most Powerful Arguments, of our being Servants of the same Lord, and Sharing in the same Privileges, and Members of the same body, which are all most strong Motives to Peace and mutual Kindness; and besides all this, by our own Solemn Covenant and Engagement also. For in coming to this Feast, we are not only excited to it by mighty Reasons which suggest it, but are to Covenant and Promise Love to all our Brethren, and to plight our Troth for the same. And thus the Primitive Christians understood it, and accordingly made use thereof; whose Judgment and Practice in this Point were so apparent, that the Heathens themselves, who looked any thing into their Religion, took notice of it. Fr Pliny, in his Letter to the Emperor Trajan, wherein he gives an Account of the Christians Meetings, reports their Communicating in the Eucharist, to be a Religious Compact and Combination among themselves, that they will do no hurt to each other, but will love as Brethren,

# Chap. I. in the Holy Sacrament. 41

and live as Friends together. † They assemble early in the morning, says he, and sing an Hymn to Christ as God; and then bind themselves mutually in their Sacrament, which is a sacred Oath, not to join in committing any wickedness like a pack of lewd Conspirators; but Religiously to keep off from the same, and to be no Thieves, Adulterers, nor Injurious, nor False and Perfidious Persons: And having done these things, and given these Assurances of mutual Honesty and Kindness to each other, they depart home, and meet again at a promiscuous and Friendly Treat, where they innocently Feast together.

† Soliti statō die ante lucem convenire; carmenque Christo, quasi Deo dicere secum invicem: Sequē Sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne Adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellari abnegarent. quibus peractis morem sibi discendendi fuisse, rursusque coeundi ad capescendum cibum, promiscuum tamen & innoxium. Plin. ep. l. 10. ep. 97.

This then is a third End of our Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Holy Sacrament, namely, to be a Solemn Profession of our Communion and Fellowship with our Brethren, and an Engagement of mutual Love and Friendship to those who Communicate with us, and to all others.

## 42 *The meaning of Feasting* Part I.

others. So that when we come therein to remember our Saviour Christ, and to confirm the new Covenant with Almighty God, we must enter into a League of Love with all our Brethren, and promise an inviolable Friendship unto them too.

And thus we see what is the meaning of Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Holy Communion, and what we must intend and understand by them, that we may, as  
*\* 1 Cor. 11. 22. the Apostle says, \* discern the Lords Body therein.* When we Eat Bread and Drink Wine according to Christs appointment, we must fix our thoughts upon him, and remember what Love and Friendship he bore to us; what Lessons, as our Faithful Guide and Instructor, he has taught us; what Commands, as our Lord and Master, he has left with us; and what inexpressible Things, as our most Precious Saviour and Benefactor, he has done for us in being made Man, and leading a mean and necessitous Life, but above all in dying a most ignominious and painful Death for our sakes, and that he might purchase for us the Favour of God, the Graces of the Holy Spirit, and Eternal Happiness.

We

We must renew that Engagement which we made with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, when we were Baptized, and confirm again that new Covenant with Almighty God, which was procured by his precious Blood; professing that we do, and will believe his Word, and repent of all our Transgressions, and endeavour with his Spirit, and obey all, not wilfully transgressing any of his holy Commandments; that so we may have Right to that Forgiveness, Grace, and Happiness, which upon these Terms he has purchased for us. And lastly, we must confirm a League of Love and Friendship with all our Brethren, professing that we do and will forgive all who have injured us, and be kind to all about us, and never fall into Hatred or cause Difference with any Persons, but be at Peace and live in Charity with all the World. The Bodily Eating is but the out-side, and the least part in this Feast; but the Chief thing required, is this Spiritual Work and Business, which is to accompany it. So that when our Saviour Christ calls us to Eat and Drink at his own Table, he calls us not barely to Feast our Bodies, for that is the least thing that he intends; but chiefly and principally to employ our Souls, in remembering him, his Laws and Benefits, and among them, above all others, that of his Dying  
D for



44      *Of Communicating*      Part I.  
for us; in confirming the New Covenant  
with God, and a Covenant of Peace and  
Brotherly Love with his Members through-  
out all Mankind.

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## CHAP. II.

*Of the Worthiness of Communicating  
in the Holy Sacrament.*

### The Contents.

*To Communicate Worthily, is to do it with  
such Tempers and Behaviour as are worthy  
of it, and becoming the Things which are  
meant thereby. The First End was to  
remember Christ, both, 1. As our Lord  
and Master, which calls for Honour and  
Reverence in our selves, and a Care to  
maintain his Honour among others. For  
mindfulness of his Commands, and Reso-  
lutions of Obedience. 2. As our most  
kind Friend and Benefactor, which calls for  
Love and an hearty Affection for him. For  
Joy and Gladness in what we receive from  
him. For Thankfulness for all his Kind-  
nesses, particularly in Dying for us. And  
as this Death was a Sacrifice for our Sins,  
the Remembrance of it calls for a deep sense*

of

of our own Unworthiness. An utter Abhorrence of our own Sins, which caused his Sufferings. A Resignation of our selves to his Use, as thereby we are become his own Purchase. The Second End, was to confirm the New Covenant with God which was purchased by his Blood. This calls for Sincerity and Faithfulness. A Third End was to confirm a League of Love and Friendship with all Christians. This calls for Peace and Charity to all Persons, and particularly for Alms to the Neccessitous. A Summary Repetition of these Qualifications. A Belief of these Things, which carries us on to these Tempers and Performances, is the Faith that makes us Worthy Communicants.

**H**AVING shewn hitherto what is the meaning of Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Blessed Sacrament; I proceed now, in the next place, to shew wherein the Worthiness of doing this lies. And this had need be clearly stated, not only because the most considerable Scruple against Communicating lies therein, but also because really 'tis a Matter of great account, and there hangs a great weight upon it. For he that eats and drinks unworthily, says the Apostle, commits a Damning Sin, which will destroy him,

unless he repent of the same; *he eats and drinks Damnation to himself*, 1 Cor. 11, 29; and *is guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord*, v. 27.

Now to *Do this Worthily*, is to *Do it with such Tempers and Dispositions, as become it, and are worthy of it*. For this Eating and Drinking not being to satisfy Hunger, but for Sacred Ends; 'tis fit we should come to it with a suitable and Sacred Carriage, and in that consists the Worthiness of the Usage. Were it only a Feast on Common Food, we should behave our selves worthily thereat, by *thanking God for the same, and being Temperate*. But being a Feast, wherein Religion is concern'd, and whereat we are to *remember the Death of our Dearest Lord, and to Seal the New Covenant with Almighty God, and a League of Love with all the Christian World*; to the doing this worthily, and as 'tis fit we should, there is more required. For we deal very unworthily in *remembering the Death of our Dearest Lord*, if we are not *thankful for it*; and in *ratifying the New Covenant with God*, if we are not *sincere therein*; and in *promising Love to all the Christian World*, if amidst these Promises we still bear *Enmity and Hatred* towards them. These Religious Ends, must be answered with

a Religious Temper, and a Devout Carriage; and then they are treated as they ought to be, and as their Worth requires. This is signified by several Copies, which in 1 Cor. 11. 27. read not barely, *Who-so-ever shall eat this Bread, and drink this Cup*

*\* OF THE LORD UN-*

*WORTHILY*; but *who-so-ever shall Eat this Bread, and Drink this Cup of the Lord, UNWORTHILY*

*OF THE LORD, (i. e.)* in a way unworthy of him; which clearly shews that the Unworthiness consists in the want of those Tempers wherewith 'tis fit our Blessed Lord should be treated, when he is Solemnly Remembered and Commemorated. And

this the Apostle plainly intimates, when he places the *unworthiness of Eating*, in not *Discerning*, or rather in not *Discriminating* the *Lords Body*,

and putting a difference between it and our Common Food, by shewing a different Carriage and Behaviour in our Receipt thereof. *He that eats and drinks unworthily, says he, eats and drinks Damnation to*

*\* Not merely πιν τὸ ποτήριον τῆς κυρίου ἀναξίως, but ἀναξίως τῆς κυρίου, as several MMS. partic. Coll. Linc. Coll. Nov. read the place. And this is followed by St. Ambrose, who reads thus-- Bibe- rit Calicem Domini Indigne Domino, v 27. and St. Chrysostom, who reads thus-- ἐδραν καὶ πίνον ἀναξίως [τῆς κυρίου] καὶ μὴ τῷ, Ec. v. 29.*

himself, for such unworthy usage, which  
 lies in his *not discerning*,  
 ἢ μὴ διακρίνω. or rather *not discriminating*  
 the Lords Body,

1 Cor. 11. 29.

Thus, doth a worthy Eating of the Holy Sacrament, consist in answering its Sacred Ends, with Sacred and suitable Carriage and Dispositions. And therefore, that we may see what Behaviour is worthy of it, 'tis fit we run over those several Ends, and enquire what Tempers every one of them requires of us.

Those Ends are Three.

1st, To Remember Christ our Blessed Lord and Saviour, and particularly his Dying for us; which call for Love, Joy, Gratitude, Obedient Resolutions, and such like Tempers.

2ly, To Confirm the New Covenant with Almighty God; which is not worthily done by us, unless we come to it in Sincerity and Faithfulness, and with full Purpose and Performance of that Repentance and Obedience, which we therein profess and make promise of.

3ly, To Confirm a League of Love and Friendship, with all our Brethren and Fellow-Christians; which requires that we lay aside all Envy, Hatred, and Malicious Thoughts, and come to it in Peace and Forgiveness of all those, who have any ways offended us.

If

If we *Believe* all these things which *Jesus Christ* our Great Prophet has reveal'd to us, and our *Faith* shews it self in these *Tempers*, and carries us on to these *Performances*; we are *Worthy Communicants*, and have that *Faith*, which will render us welcome Guests at the Lords Table, and acceptable to him at all other times.

1st, One End of our Eating Bread and Drinking Wine at the Lords Supper, is to remember *Christ*, not only as our Prophet and Teacher (which I do not make a *Distinct Head* now, because the *Belief* required to that is exercised thro' the whole Action, and falls in at all the other) but as our *Blessed Lord, Saviour* and *Benefactor*; and above all his Benefits, particularly to remember *his Dying for us*: and this, to do it worthily, calls for *Love, Joy, Gratitude, Resolutions of Obedience*, and other such like *Tempers*.

The Remembrance of any thing absent, and long since past, brings it back into our Minds, and gives a sort of *Presence* to it. And therefore when things are brought to our Remembrance, they should work upon us, and affect us, as if they were before us. When we remember our Saviour Christ then, at this holy Feast, we must bear the same Mind towards him, as we should do if we saw  
D. 4. him,

him, and were conversing with him : and that will consist in these Things which follow. We must *Honour him*, and resolve to *Obey him*, as he is our *Lord and Master* ; and love him, and delight in him, and give *Thanks to him*, as he is our *Friend and Benefactor* ; and be *humbled under the sense of our own Unworthiness*, and *Abhor our own Sins*, as they brought him to *Bleed and Die for us* ; and resign up our selves, both *Souls and Bodies*, to his *Use*, as we are bought with his *Blood*, and are thereby become his own *Purchase*.

1st, In Eating and Drinkiing in the Lords Supper, we are to remember *Jesus Christ as our Lord and Master* : and to do that *Worthily*, we must remember him with *Honour and Reverence*, and with *Mindfulness of his Commands, and Resolutions of Obedience*, which are Duties that we all owe, and should pay to him, were he present with us.

1st, We ought to remember him our *Lord and Master*, with *Honour and Reverence*.

These Tempers *Lordship and Authority* always call for, whensoever they are lodged in any Persons. *A Son honoureth his Father*, saith God, and a *Servant his Master* : If then I be a *Father*, where is mine *Honour* ? And if I be a *Master*, where is

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*is my Fear? Mal. 1. 6. Honour the King, says St. Peter, and Servants be subject to your Masters with all Fear, 1 Pet. 2. 17; 18. And Render to all their Dues, says St. Paul, as Fear or Reverence to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour is due, Rom. 13. 7.*

But when this Authority is in the most absolute and full Degrees, and is joined with the highest Excellencies, and tempered with the most Endearments, and guided by the most surpassing Goodness, as it is in Christ Jesus, it calls for them most especially. For he is every way wonderfully accomplished, and has all those Endowments in their greatest perfection, which of right can challenge, or are fit to excite them. For he is boundless in knowledge, he <sup>a</sup>understands all things; and infinitely <sup>b</sup>wise in Counsel, able to suit means to every end, and to bring about every Purpose; and surpassing in <sup>c</sup>Might, so that he may do what he pleases; and <sup>d</sup>holy in all his ways; and <sup>e</sup>faithful in all his Promises; and <sup>f</sup>just and equitable in all his Dealings; and Glorious in his Divine Essence, being

<sup>a</sup> Joh. 21. 17.

<sup>b</sup> Isa. 11. 1, 2.

<sup>c</sup> Isa. 9. 6. &

Rev. 3. 7.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Joh. 3. 5.

<sup>e</sup> Rev. 3. 7.

<sup>f</sup> Isa. 9. 7.



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being the very *g Brightness*  
*g* Heb. 1. 3.      of his Fathers Glory, and  
the express Image of his Person; and Su-  
pereminent in Power, having  
*h* Mat. 28. 18.      all *h* Authority in Heaven  
and Earth put into his hands.

And yet in the midst of all these *Excel-*  
*lencies*, and the height of all this *Great-*  
*ness*, which are apt to puff us up with  
*Pride and Contempt of others,*

*i* 1 Joh. 3. 16.      he is *unspeakable in i Love,*  
*k* Phil. 2. 6,      and wonderful in *k Conde-*  
7, 8.      scensions, vouchsafing to  
leave Heaven, where he was

*Equal to God, and be made in fashion of a*  
*mean Man, for our sakes;*

*i* Mar. 10. 45.      and he is *unwearied in i do-*  
Act. 10. 38.      ing Services; and most prodi-  
giously free in *Bounty and*

*m* Joh. 6. 15.      Kindness, giving his own  
Rev. 5. 9.      *m* Hearts Blood to purchase  
Heaven and Eternal Life

for us: for all which *Height of Excel-*  
*lencies*, and *Plenitude of Power*, and  
*Depth of Love*, he is most

*n* Rev. 5. 11,      *n* profoundly Reverenced,  
12, 13.      and dearly Prized; and  
highly exalted by *Glorified*

*Saints*, and the pure and immortal *Angels.*

All these *adorable Excellencies*, are in their  
utmost Perfection in our Lord and Master,

Christ

Christ Jesus ; and their *Merit* calls for all the *Honour* and *Reverence* which he can possibly receive from us. And this accordingly God has expressly required of us. *He hath committed all Judgment to the Son, that all should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father, Joh. 5. 22, 23.* and highly exalting him, hath given him a *Name* above every *Name*, that at the *Name* of *Jesus* every *Knee* should bow, of things in *Heaven*, and of things in *Earth*, *Phil. 2, 9* 10. He incomparably deserves our utmost *Worship* and *Reverence*, and has a most absolute claim to them ; so that we must needs treat him with the most submissive and respectful *Carriage*, and should deal most unworthily by him, and do what utterly misbecomes us, if we should do otherwise.

Thus must we remember our *Lord* and *Master* *Jesus Christ* with *Honour* and *Veneration*, if we would do it in such sort as is worthy of him.

Nay, we must not only *Honour* and *Reverence* him *our selves* ; but, if we would deal worthily by him, seek to *make him Honourable*, and promote his *Honour* among *others*. We must be ready always to plead his *Cause*, and to vindicate his *Precepts*, and to side with his *Servants*, and express a just *Dislike* against the  
who,

who transgress his Commands themselves, (and much more against those who set up for the Party of Disobedience, and seek to draw in others,) who prophane his Ordinances, or lightly and irreverently use his Name, or any ways vilifie any Person or Thing which he ought to be Glorified and Honoured in. And this we shall be sure to do, if we have any high Esteem, and Zeal of Love, and affectionate Concern for him. For when these are strong in them, every *Servant* will perform this Office to his *Master*, and every *Man* to his *Friend*: they will not sit still, and tamely hear his Name abused, or see his Commands sleighted, his Interests opposed, his Children or Dependents injured, his Appointments disparaged, or his Person any way traduced or disgraced, without expressing a discreet and well-tempered Zeal in his Cause, and concerning themselves in a sober and just Vindication. This, I say, they ordinarily will do, as I am sure they always ought to do, when they have an high Esteem for any Person. And if thro' Lowness of Spirit, or Cowardise of Temper, they draw back from the Trouble or Hazard which they are like to run in his Vindication; they are very much wanting to their Friend or Lord, and deal unworthily by him. So that if we would deal

deal worthily by our Friend and Master. Jesus Christ, we must neither dishonour him our selves, nor, if we can help it, at least not without expressing our dislike of it, suffer it to be done by others. And therefore to make this Sacramental Remembrance worthy of him, it must not only be in shewing Honour and Reverence to him our selves, but in a readiness to maintain his Honour, and promote his Interest among others also.

2ly, We must Remember Christ our Lord and Master, with *mindfulness of his Commands, and Resolutions of Obedience.*

This is another Temper, which Lordship and Authority over us calls for. For the most proper Duty of *Subjects* towards their *Sovereigns*, and of *Servants* towards their *Masters*, is *Obedience*, or a Carefulness to perform whatsoever they enjoin and require them. *Put them in mind*, says the Apostle, *to be subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates*, Tit. 3. 1. And *Servants obey your Masters in all things, not with eye service, but in singleness of heart, fearing God*, Col. 3. 22. And *Why call ye me Lord, Lord, says our Saviour, and do not the things which I say?* Luc. 6. 46.

Thus is Obedience the great Duty which we owe to all Masters and Governours who are put in Authority over us. We must nei-  
ther

ther forget the Commands which they have left with us, nor knowingly transgress them, but carefully call them into our Minds, and conscientiously practice them when we do remember and consider what they are.

And this we are then especially bound to, if they are not only our *Masters* but our *Dearest Friends*, and *Noblest Benefactors* also. For these are Names that add new Bonds, and higher Obligations, which will have a great Force so long as there is any thing of ingenuity left in us. And therefore since our Blessed Master Jesus, is not only our Rightful Lord and Governour, but withal our most surpassing kind Friend and Benefactor, we ought in all Duty and Gratitude to be mindful of what he desires, and to do any thing that he would have us; and we deal most undutifully and unworthily by him, if we do otherwise. So that this also is another Instance of the Worthiness of this Remembrance, to be mindful of the Laws, which he has given us, and to think of them with a readiness and firm Resolution to obey them.

These are the things then, which must render our remembrance worthy of him under this relation. When we Eat and Drink in Commemoration of Jesus Christ our Lord and King, we must Honour and

Reve-

Reverence him *our selves*, and be concerned to *maintain his Honour*, and promote his *Interests among others*, and be mindful of *all the Commands* which he has left with us, and *stand ready and resolved to obey them*.

2ly, In Eating Bread and Drinking Wine at the Lords Supper, we are to remember the Blessed *Jesus*, as our *most kind Friend and Benefactor*: and to do this worthily, we must remember him with *true Love of him*, and *Delight in him*, and *grateful Rec-sentments and hearty Thanks* for all the kindnesses which we have recieved from him.

1st, We must remember him our *most kind Friend and Benefactor with true Love*, and an *hearty Affection for him*.

This is due to him as he is our *Gracious Lord*, and indeed in every Relation that he stands in, since in all he is most wonderfully winning and obliging. For even there he seeks our own Good, in all the commands which he lays upon us; and treats us with much Gentleness, and encourages every thing that is well in us; and pities our unavoidable Infirmities, and bears our many and high Provocations with invincible Patience, and sends Messengers of Peace to entreat and sue for a Reconciliation with us upon any Difference, tho' tis not his Interest but ours, and tho' not he but we are the Offenders; and, when

he is forced to punish us, he doth it always with the greatest reluctance; but when he can take an occasion to reward us, he doth that with the greatest Joy and chearfulness: all which are strangely engaging, and must needs constrain all ingenuous Tempers to be heartily in love with him.

But our Love is due to him more especially, as he is our *most kind Friend*, who loves us as he doth his own Life; and our *most noble Benefactor*, who has so infinitely obliged us, and done such kindnesses for us, as we are not able to express.

He is our *true Friend*, who espouses our Interests as his own, and is sensible of all our wants, and pained in all our Afflictions, and rejoyces in all our Joys, and seeks to make us share in his own Happiness, and would part with any thing he hath to please us, nay, give his own Hearts Blood in any Case which were worth the while to do us a Kindness.

He is our *most Noble Benefactor*, who has done us such Kindnesses, as are beyond all Expressions, having procured for us the Favour of God, the Help of the Spirit, and the assured Hope of Eternal Happiness, when all these seemed irrevocably lost, and no way attainable by us; and when he could not gain them at a less Rate,

Rate, than by laying down his own Life for the Purchase.

And these are Endearments, which pass all imagination; they are such Arguments to a reciprocal Love and Kindness, as cannot be withstood by any Man. So that having received all this Love from him, we must needs return the small Tribute of Love to him again, or else we should be the unworthiest of any persons living.

And this is one Temper, which is necessary to a worthy Remembrance of so kind a Friend, and so noble a Benefactor, as we have of our Blessed Saviour: We must love the Thoughts of him, and be most kindly affected towards him, or else we shall shew our selves utterly unworthy of him.

2<sup>ly</sup>, We must Remember him our most Noble Benefactor, and the Favours which he has done us, with Joy and Gladness.

This is a Temper very necessary in us, when we would worthily Commemorate the Receipt of Benefits. For when we rejoyce in them, we shew what Rate we put upon them, and how much we are pleased in them, and how happy we think our selves in that Love which has bestowed them on us. And this will make the Person who conferred them to think them well placed, and please himself in what he has done,



done, concluding, that we, who are so sensible of a Kindness when 'tis shewed us, are worthy to receive one. And therefore the Scripture calls all good Men, who have received most invaluable Benefits, to Joy and Gladness. *Rejoyce in the Lord, O ye Righteous*, saith the Psalmist, *for Praise is comely for the Upright*, Psal. 33. 1.

And this we all ought to shew, when we Commemorate those Blessings, which our Blessed Saviour has conferred upon us. He has got all those things for us, which our hearts can wish, no less than the pure and perfect Joys of Heaven, and Eternal Happiness; and these he has taken the hardest pains, and been at the greatest Cost to compass, laying down his own Life for them, rather than he would suffer us to go without them. And this we ought not at any time to think of, without Joy and Gladness. When we reflect upon so great Love, and such inestimable Benefits, 'tis most fit and reasonable we should rejoyce over them; that thereby we may shew forth how happy we think our selves in them. And our Blessed Lord may well think he threw them away upon us, and repent that ever he bestowed them, or took such pains for them, if after all he sees us insensible of what he has done, and still as cold and unaffected, as if we had received nothing.

So that if we would worthily Commemorate the Receipt of so great Happiness, we must do it with joyful Hearts, and chearful Looks, and an open show of Gladness; as we are told the *Disciples* did in the first Days, who, as *St. Luke* says, *continued daily in the Temple, and breaking Bread, eating it with Gladness of Heart, Act. 2. 46.*

3ly, We must Remember him our most Noble Benefactor, with grateful Resentments, and hearty Thanks for all his kindnesses, particularly for that inestimable one of his Dying for us.

In Thankfulness are implied two things.

1st, A grateful acknowledgement of the Gift, and a Praising him who gave it.

2ly, A Readiness, and Endeavour according to our Power, to requite it.

It implies a grateful Acknowledgment of the Gift, and a Praising of him that gave it. For when we receive an underserved Benefit, it is very fit that we let the Donor know we are sensible thereof, and understand very well both our Happiness in receiving, and his Kindness in bestowing it. We must give him the praise of his Beneficence, and express a sense of our own Obligations: For if we fail in this, we shew, either that we *contemn his Gift*, and set no value on it; or that we think it only a *Tribute to our own Desert*, so as that we are not beholding to him.

him for it; or that we would be *independent*, and are too proud to be obliged by it; all which, had they been known to him before-hand, would have made *him*, and *all men*, to judge us most *unworthy* to receive it.

It implies also a *Readiness*, and *Endeavour according to our Power, to requite it* For Love should engage Love, and the Kindnesses which are done to us, should oblige us upon all Opportunities to do the same again. To encourage Benefits and bestowed Favours; we ought to take care, that they who gave them may never have just cause to repent of them, and to let them see, that if we had the power and Opportunity, we would do as much for them. For Kindnesses should be a sort of *Loans*, which, upon any fit occasion, are to be repaid back to him who shew'd them, that so all Men may be encouraged to abound in them, and never be hindred from the same by a fear, lest afterwards they should be offended with themselves for having bestowed them. And if any Man is either so *stupid*, or so *proud*, that he will take no notice of them, nor endeavour afterwards to requite them, by the consent of all he is unfit to be dealt with in this *generous* way of Love, and is utterly *unworthy* to receive them.

Thus doth Thankfulness imply, both

an affectionate Acknowledgment of the Gift, and Praising him who gave it; and also a Readiness, and Endeavour according to our Power to requite it.

And this we owe in the highest measure to our Saviour Christ, and must be sure always to pay it to him, when we Commemorate the inestimable Benefits which we have received from him. We must nor remember the great things which he has done for us, in delivering us from Eternal Death, and in gaining for us the Favour of God, and the Joys of Heaven, when it cost him no less than his own Hearts Blood for the Purchase, without affectionate Resentments, and Mouths full of Praise, and a fixt Readiness and Resolution of Mind to make what small requital we are able in our Zeal for his Service, and in our Kindness to his *Brethren*, whom he looks upon as his own Members, resenting any Good that is *done to them, as if it were done to himself*, Matt. 25 40. And this Duty of Thankfulness, is a most especial Requisite to our Worthy Commemoration of his Benefits in this Feast. For *Praising God*, is reckoned as one Particular of the Disciples Carriage in their *Breaking Bread*, Act. 2 *They continued daily breaking Bread*, says St. Luke, *which they eat with gladness, praising God*, v. 46, 47.

Nay,

Nay, so great a share has Thanksgiving and Praise in this Business, that the whole Action is called the *Eucharist*, i. e. the Giving of Thanks to God for those Benefits, which are Commemorated therein.

And these are the Things, which must render our Remembrance worthy of him, when we Commemorate him as our *Friend* and *Benefactor* in this holy Supper. We must love him for his Kindnesses, and delight in his Benefits, and be thankful for all his Favours, particularly for that which is therein especially Commemorated, his *Dying* upon our accounts, bursting out into grateful *Acknowledgments* and *Words of Praise*, and being ready and resolved by our *Zeal in his Service*, our *Observance of his Laws*, and our *Kindness to his poor Members*, to make him all the small *Requit*al we are able, so that he may never have any cause to repent of what he has done for us.

But besides this Remembrance of his Friendship to us, and *Benefits in general*, which require in us these forementioned Tempers; we are especially to commemorate the *Benefits of his Dying for us*, which more particularly calls for certain other Tempers.

In Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Lords Supper, I say, we are to remem-

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Chap. 2.

Worthily.

65

remember *his dying for us*, and shedding his *precious Blood a Ransom for our Sins*. And to do this worthily, we must be *humbled under the sense of our own unworthiness*, and *abhor our Sins* which brought him to bleed and die for us, and *resign up our selves both Souls and Bodies to his use*, as we are bought with his Blood, and thereby become his own Purchase.

1st. We must remember his Dying for us, in *an humble and deep sense of our own Unworthiness*, and in an *utter abhorrence of our Sins*, which brought him to these *Sufferings*.

We must remember it, I say, in *an humble and deep sense of our own Unworthiness*. His Death was not for any thing that he had done, but only for our Sins; and this shews what *vile Wretches* we are, and how *unworthy Persons*. It lets us see, how *hateful* our Sins had made us unto God, and what they had *deserv'd* at his Hands. For he would not let them pass, without inflicting the highest Shame, and the most exquisite Pain and Tortures. Yea, when his own only Begotten Son would intercede for them, and bear the Burden of them in his own Person, so implacable was the hatred which he had to them, and so indispensable were the Reasons which constrained him to punish them,

them, that his most tender Love for him, whom he valued as his own Right Eye, could not hinder but that he should bleed and die for them. It lets us see also, how *troublesom* they had made us to our best *Friends*, and how shamefully *burdensom* and *expensive* to the *Blessed Jesus*. For when he long'd and labour'd to redeem us from them, he could not be our Friend unless he would cease to be *his own*, nor do us any good at all, except he would give his own Life a Ransom for us. And what Man now can ever think of this, but he must hide his Face, and be quite buried in a shameful sense of his own Unworthiness? He may see how vile he was when God was so highly offended with him, and thought no Punishment too heavy for him, and would not be reconcil'd at the Intercession of his own Son, unless he would die instead of him; and when it was so dangerous and costly a thing, no less than the laying down his own Life, for his Saviour to shew himself a serviceable Friend to him. And if this Sight doth not work Shame and self-abasement in him, he will be concluded by all, to be the basest Man alive, and utterly unworthy that ever any thing of all this unparallel'd Kindness should have been done for him.

We must also remember his Dying for us, with *an utter abhorrence of our Sins, which were the Causes of his Sufferings.* For if we do not hate and abhor them, when we consider what Tortures he endured for them, we shew that we are very little concern'd for his Ease, nor have any feeling of his Pains, nor any Zeal at all against the Occasion of his Sorrows. And this is a very bad Requital of his undergoing all those Pains for our sakes, and a most unworthy Usage. So that if we would worthily Commemorate his Dying for us, we must be humbled and ashamed of our selves, at the sense of our own Unworthiness, seeing we had deserved such insupportable Punishments, and have put him to such exquisite and intense Pains; and particularly we must turn our abhorrence on our Sins, which caused all this Mischief, and made him, if he would befriend us, to undergo such heavy Tortures himself.

2ly, We must remember his Dying for us, with a *Resignation of our selves, both Souls and Bodies to his Use, as we are bought with his Blood, and thereby become his own Purchase.*

He died in our stead, and his Blood was given to God for a *Ransom*, to buy us off from Death, that we might not die also.



*The Son of Man*, saith he, *is come to give his Life a Ransom for many*, Mat. 20. 28. And since he has bought us, and paid so dear for us, to deliver us from Hell-Torments and Eternal Death, which is not *his*, but *our own* Advantage; in all Equity and Reason he ought to have the Use of us, and we should be wholly devoted to his Service. And this the Scripture requires of us: *The Love of God constrains us*, saith St. Paul, to live in him, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, 2 Cor. 5. 14. 25. And again, Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a Price; therefore glorifie God in your Body and in your Spirit, which are God's, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. And since his Dying for us has made us his own Propriety, and he has thereby acquired an absolute Right over us for his own Use, which we had infinite Reason to desire, but he had no need of; if we would remember it *worthily*, we must do it *justly*, by honestly devoting our Souls and Bodies, and assigning them over to him, to be wholly at his Service.

And these are the Things, which must render our Remembrance worthy of him, when in the Holy Sacrament we Commemorate

commemorate his Dying for us, and shedding of his most precious Blood a Ransom for our Sins. We must be *humbled* with the sense of our own Unworthiness, and *abhor our Sins*, which brought him to these Sufferings, and *resign up our selves*, both Bodies and Souls, to be wholly at his use, and employed where and in what he pleases, as thereby they are become his own Purchase.

And thus it appears what Tempers are becoming us, and worthy of this *first* End of Eating and Drinking in the Holy Sacrament, *viz. the Remembrance of our Lord and Saviour Christ, and of his Dying for us.* We must remember him, with *Honour and Reverence*, with a *careful Concern to maintain and promote his Honour* among others, with *mindfulness of his Commands, and Resolutions of Obedience*, as he is *Lord over us*: With *Love of him for his Kindness, and delight in his Benefits, and thankful Acknowledgments, and Words of Praise, and grateful Returns*, in any thing which he can receive, or we can give, for *all his Favours, particularly for his Dying on our account, as he has so highly befriended, and infinitely obliged us; and with an humble sense of our own Unworthiness, and an utter abhorrence of all our Sins, which were the Causes of his Sufferings,*

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ferings, and with an *intire Resignation of our selves*, both Souls and Bodies to his use, to be employ'd as his own Purchase in what he pleases, as his Death was a *Sacrifice* for our Sins, wherewith he bought and redeemed us. All these are Duties, which, were he now before us, and conversing with us, we ought to pay to him; and which therefore in our Remembrance of him, which makes him present to our Minds, we must not deny him; and in Them doth consist the Worthiness of this Remembrance and Commemoration.

2ly, A *second End*, of our Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Lords Supper, is to *confirm the New Covenant with Almighty God, which Christ purchased for us by his Death*: And to do this *worthily*, we must come to it in *Sincerity and Faithfulness*, and with *full purpose and performance of that Repentance and Obedience*, which therein we solemnly *profess* and make *promise* of.

We must come to it, I say, in *Sincerity and Faithfulness*. The great Qualification, which is requisite in all Compacts, is *Faithfulness*. For they are the great Means of Security among Men, and the great Thing, which they have to depend upon in their Expectations from each other: and

and therefore it is both *pretended* and *expected* by all who make them, that they will not prove false and deceitful in them. Every Man who Covenants, expects of those whom he Contracts withal, that they should mean what they profess, and perform what they promise; and makes shew also himself, that he will do so likewise. And if he doth not, he is a very dishonest unworthy Man, such as the Gospel condemns, and will sentence for the same in the End, unless he repent thereof, to eternal Destruction: *Covenant-breakers* being ranked among those, who in the *Judgment* of God are worthy of Death, Rom. i. 31, 32.

And this *Sincerity* or *Faithfulness* consists in this, that we come with full purpose and performance, of that *Repentance* and *Obedience*, which we profess and make promise of. In this Covenant, to all us *Believers*, God offers at present a Right to Pardon, his Holy Spirit, and Eternal Happiness; and we again profess, and humbly make offer unto him, of our *Repentance* and *Obedience*. And this Right he promises still to continue to us upon the same Terms; and answerably we promise to perform them upon that expectation for ever afterwards. And both in these *Professions*, and *Promises*, we must deal sincerely

ly with him: and neither pretend a present offer of them, when we want them; nor make Promises of them for the time to come, when we have no fixed Design and well-weighed Resolution to perform them.

When we come therefore to renew our *Baptismal Engagement*, and to confirm the New Covenant with Almighty God, giving him both the *Profession* and the *Promise* of these *Duties*, and receiving from him the *Proffer* and the *Promise* of these *Graces*, we must be hearty and unfeigned with him. Our Souls must really be acted by that Repentance which we profess, and fully intend to make good that Obedience which we promise. And if we perform in both these, we are *faithful* and *sincere* in this Business; but if we fail in either, we are *Dissemblers* and *Hypocrites*, who *act a Part*, and go to impose upon Almighty God, which is a very *unworthy* part of us.

And this Sincerity God expressly calls for at this Feast, and requires us to be faithful with him, when we come to confirm the New Covenant by partaking of it. *Christ our Passover*, says St. Paul, *is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the Feast, not with the Leaven of Malice and Wickedness*, by adhering still to our former wicked ways, which therefore we are to repent of, *but with the unleavened Bread*

*Bread of Sincerity and Truth, 1 Cor. 5. 7, 8* And as for *Repentance* particularly, which is the great Condition of the Covenant that is renewed in it, it is the great Qualification of all worthy Receivers, and is most indispensably required in this Holy Sacrament. It is the Chief thing which is look'd at in every Confirmation of the Covenant, and therefore is so peremptorily called for when

we are <sup>o</sup> Baptized: it is <sup>o</sup> Act. 2. 38.  
the only thing that can <sup>Luc. 3. 3.</sup>

<sup>P</sup>recommenda a Sacrifice, <sup>P</sup> Psal. 51. 17.

and therefore is the main point which must fit us for *this Feast upon*

a Sacrifice. And this the Antient Church

always thought of it; as it plainly

shew'd, when at the Celebration of the

Eucharist, the Bishop cry-

ed out, *These Holy Things*

*must be taken only by Holy*

*Persons*; and as St. Am-

brose clearly informs us,

when he says, *This is*

*the Order of dispensing this*

*MYSTERY* which every

*Church observes, that first*

*upon their true Repentance*

*their Sins may be forgiven*

*them, and then this Hea-*

*venly Food shall be admini-*

ἡ ὁμοίαν κείνης  
προσφωνοῦνται,  
τῷ λαῷ ἔπειτα τὰ  
ἁγία τοῖς ἁγί-  
οις. Confir. A-  
post. 1. 8. c. 13  
p. 484. Tom.  
prim. Concil.  
Ed. Par. Lab.  
Ubiq. myste-  
rii ordo servatur  
ut prius per re-  
missionem Pec-  
catorum vulne-

ribus medicina *stred and reach'd out to*  
 tribuatur, po- *them.*  
 stea alimonia mensæ Cœlesti exuberet. *S. An-*  
*bros. Comment, in Luc. l. 6. c. 9.*

As this Eating and drinking then is a Federal Rite, and in Confirmation of the New Covenant, it requires that we should be Faithful and Sincere in doing of the same. And then we come worthily, and partake of it as we ought, when we truly *Repent* of all our Sins. according as we profess; and are *fully purposed*, according as we promise, at all times after so to do.

3ly, A third End of our Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Lords Supper, is, to *confirm a League of Love and Friendship with all Christians*: and this requires, that we lay aside all *Envy, Hatred, and Malicious Thoughts*; and come to it in *Peace* and *Forgiveness* of all who have any ways offended us.

We must not come to it in *Envy, Hatred, and Malicious Thoughts*; for that were to give the Lye to ourselves, and to contradict our own Professions. For when we come there to partake of that *one Bread*, we profess our selves as has been shewn, to be all *one Body*, and that we are all the *Body of Christ*, and *Members one of another*. We solemnly declare, that we will be Friends from that day forwards with all persons, and fully reconciled even to our bitter Enemies,

nemies and to those who have given us the highest Provocations, tho' not for their own sakes, yet for the sake of the Blessed *Jesus*, who has bore a thousand times more from us, and deserves infinitely beyond what this comes to at our hands. We promise mutually, that we will lay aside all little Piques, and not fall out into Quarrels or Contentions, nor bear Ill-will, or be vexatious among our selves, nor seek our own Pleasure, Honour, or Advantage at our Brethrens loss. But that we will all have a compassionate sence of each others Infirmities, and a tender concern and diligent care for each others welfare; that we will live as Members of the same Body, which all feel what befalls any, and are all solaced with the same Joys, and all languish in the same sorrows, and all unite in the same Ends, and all bear the Weaknesses, and supply the Needs, and seek the Good and Pleasure of each other, as they do their own. All this Good-will and Brotherly-Kindness, Peace and Forgiveness towards all Persons, we profess in eating together at this Feast; and therefore it is most unworthy dealing if we want them, and are even then acted by Hatred, Envy, and malicious Thoughts which are most opposite and contrary to them.

Thus is it necessary when we confirm



this League of love and Friendship to our Brethren, that we lay aside all Envy and Ill-will, and have perfect Charity towards all Men. And this Charity must be shewn, as in *Prayers* and *Good Wishes* at all times, and in *Courteous Carriage* and *good Offices*, as oft as we have opportunity, towards all *Persons*; so particularly in *giving Alms*, and *affording Relief* to such as are in *warm* and *necessity*. For the League of Love whereinto we are then to enter, and which Christ Exacts of us, is not only to bestow *fair words*, or *compassionate looks*, or *faint wishes*; but, if we are able, to *relieve* as we have opportunity, and supply those who stand in need of our substance. If a Brother or a Sister be naked, says St. James, or destitute of daily Food? and one of you say to them, Depart in Peace, be ye warmed or filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are necessary for the Body, what doth it profit? Jam. 2. 15, 16. My little Children, saith St. John, let us not love in word only, neither in Tongue, but in Deed and in Truth: And hereby, i. e. by this useful operative Charity; we know that we are of the Truth, and shall assure our hearts before him, 1 Joh. 3. 18, 19 And thus the Ancient Christians constantly used to do, in the Apostles times. For then at every Lords Supper, they had another Supper of their own,

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Chap. 2.

Worthily.

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own, which they call'd a *Love Feast*, or *Feast of Charity*, Jud. 12. This consisted of such Provisions, as every Communicant brought along with him; they who were *Rich* brought in much, and the *Poorer* fort less, but when it came, they all sate down in a Brotherly way, and shared in common. Which when the *Corinthians* failed to do, every one eating as they came, without tarrying for their Brethren, and the Rich taking their own large Portions to themselves, and leaving the Poor to blush at the scantiness of theirs; the Apostle reprov'd them sharply, telling them how much they prophaned this Holy Feast by such corrupt usage. *In eating*, says he, at this Feast, instead of joyning all like loving Brethren at a common Supper, *every one taketh before other his own Supper*, or that which he brought for his own share: *and one who brought little, is Hungry* through his scarceness; *and another, who brought much, is Drunken* with the excess of his. *Shall I praise you in this; I praise you not*, 1 Cor 11. 21, 22. And when this way of being Charitable to the Poor at this Feast, was laid aside; by reason of abuses crept into the same, another was still used, which to this day is practised in most and the best of our Churches, as 'tis fit it should be in all, and that is, ha-  
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ving offerings for the Poor at every Communion, which may afterwards be distributed among them. Which is a most proper way, and excellent opportunity, not only of exercising that Charity which therein we profess to them; but also of expressing our Thankfulness to our Blessed Saviour, for the invaluable benefits which we have received from him. For in being thus kind to his poor Members, whom he is so tenderly concerned for, we make some slight return and poor requital unto him, who puts their Receipts upon his own score, taking what we do to them as done to his own Person. *Inasmuch as ye have done it unto these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me, Mat. 25. 40.*

And these are the things, which must render our Eating and Drinking, as it is in Confirmation of a *League of Love and Friendship with all our Brethren*, worthy of that signification. We must lay aside all *Envy and Malicious Thoughts*, and come to it in *Forgiveness* of all those who have offended us, and in *Charity* to all our Neighbours, which we must express, as in other things, so particularly in giving *Alms* to such whose necessities require it of us.

And all these the *Scripture* it self marks out, as necessary Qualifications in all worthy Communicants. *Let us keep the Feast,* says

says the Apostle, *not with the Leaven of Malice*, 1 Cor 5. 8. *When ye come together into one place*, says he again, *I hear there be Divisions among you*; And, when there are so, *this is not to eat the Lords Supper*, one end whereof is to unite you, 1 Cor. 11. 18, 20. *If thou bring thy Gift to the Altar*, says our Saviour, *and there rememberest that thy Brother hath ought against thee*, *leave there thy Gift before the Altar*, *and go and first be reconciled to thy Brother*, *and then come and offer thy Gift*, Mat. 5. 23, 24. And as for the *Distribution of Alms* at this time; that, as we saw, was the *Apostolical way* in the *Love-Feasts*, as also in the *Collections for the Poor*, as every Man had laid by him in store, on the *First day of the Week* (when they always had a Sacrament) which St. Paul mentions, 1 Cor. 16. 2. And when these Feasts fail'd, yet these Collections and Offerings at the Lords Table still continued, and do in most Places, which in this respect are fit to be Patterns to all others, unto this day.

And thus at last we see, wherein the *Worthiness* of Eating and Drinking in this Holy Feast consists, and what Tempers and Dispositions in us, are worthy of all those Ends, which are signified and designed by it. We must Eat and Drink, in Remembrance

brance of *Jesus Christ*, and of his *Dying* for us, with *Honour* and *Reverence*, with a careful Concern to maintain and promote his Honour among others, with *mindfulness* of his *Commands*, and *Resolutions* of *Obedience*, as he is *Lord* over us: with *Love* of him for his *Kindness* and *Delight* in his *Benefits*, and *thankful Acknowledgments*, and *grateful Returns* for all his *Favours*, particularly for his submitting to *tast Death* on our account, as he so highly *befriended*, and *infinitely obliged* us: and with an *humble sense* of our own *unworthiness*, and an *utter abhorrence* of all our *Sins*, which were the *Causes* of all his *Sufferings*; and with an *intire Resignation* of our *selves*, both *Souls* and *Bodies*, to his *use*, to be employed as his own *Purchase* in what he pleases, as his *Death* was a *Sacrifice* for our *Sins*, wherewith he bought and redeemed us. We must *Eat* and *Drink* in *confirmation* of the *new Covenant*, professing our consent to the *Terms* thereof, and our *Resolution* to stand by it, in all *Sincerity* and *Faithfulness*: coming to it with that true *Repentance* of all our *Sins*, and with those *obedient Hearts*, which we profess; and with a *full purpose* of making all that good afterwards which we promised in the same. And, lastly, we must *Eat* and *Drink* in *confirmation* of a *League* of *Love* and *Friendship* with all our *Brethren*, laying  
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aside all *Envy* and *Malice* towards them, and making *Ristitution* where we have wronged them, and *forgiving* them heartily where we have any *Grudge* against them, and giving *Alms* as our ability and their *Necessities* shall require the same, and so being in perfect *Peace* and *Charity* with all Men..

And if we *believe* all these things, and are carried on by such *Belief* to all these *Tempers* and *performances*; we have that *Faith*, which will render us *Worthy Communicants*, and acceptable to God at all other times. If we *believe* *Jesus Christ* to be our *Lord* and *Master*, and thereupon do *Reverence*, *Honour*, and *Obey* him; if we *believe* him to be our best *Friend* and *Benefactor*, and thereupon do *love* him, and *delight* in him, and are *thankful* to him; if we *believe* that he shed his own *Hearts Blood* for our *Sins* and for the *Redemption* of our *Souls*, and thereupon are *humbled* with the *sense* of our own *unworthiness*, and *abhor* our *Sins*, which have proved so *Mischievous*, and *resign* up both our *Souls* and *Bodies* wholly to his *use*, as they are his own *Purchase*: If we *believe* that his *Death* procured us the *Grace* and *Blessings* of the new *Covenant*, which promises all *Believers* *Pardon* upon their *Repentance*, and the *Holy Spirits* *Help* upon their own *Sincere Endeavours*, and *Eternal Life* upon their  
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*intire Obedience*; and thereupon do heartily consent to it, and perform that *Repentance* and *Obedience* which are the Condition thereof, and are *faithful* and *sincere* in our Promises and Resolutions to stand by the same: And lastly, if we *believe* that he requires us to *love*, and *live in peace* with all the World; and thereupon in this Holy Sacrament do *confirm a League of Friendship* with all our Brethren, laying aside all *Enmity and Hatred*, and being in perfect *Charity* with all Men: If we have all this *Faith*, I say, which, as appears, is thoroughly exercised in this Blessed Sacrament; and can shew all these *Fruits* thereof, in these Tempers and Performances being effected by it; we have that *true, saving, justifying Faith*, which the Scripture speaks of, which *purifies the Heart*, Act. 15. 9. and *works by love*, Gal. 5. 6. and is *lively in Good Works*, Jam. 2. 20, 26. And this will make us *Worthy Communicants* at this Feast, and welcome to God at all other times.

# CHAP. III.

## *A further Account of this Worthiness.*

### The Contents.

*These recired Tempers, are necessary in the Person Communicating, but are not all necessary to be expressly exercised in the time of Communion. A Direction, in which of these Tempers it may be fit to lay out our Devotion at that time. All these are provided for in the Churches Prayers, so that we may exercise them Worthily, if we go along devoutly at all the Parts of the Communion-Service.*

**I**N the former Chapter, I have reckon'd up those Tempers, which render us *Worthy Communicants*, and fit us to be bidden Welcom at the *Lord's Supper*, whensoever he is pleased to invite and call us thither.

But of them I must observe, That altho' they are necessary in the Person Communicating; yet are they not all of necessity, to be particularly and expressly insisted on in the Time of Communion.

They are all necessary, I say, in the Person Communicating, and he is not not worthy



worthy to remember such a Lord and Saviour, to sign the New Covenant with Almighty God, and a League of Amity and Friendship with all the Christian World, who wants any of them. They are altogether due from us as we have seen, and may in all reason be expected of us, as we stand in these Relations, and are admitted to these Employments: So that we act unworthily, and fail of our Duty, if our Souls are not endow'd with them, when we are in those Capacities, and about those Performances, which do so justly challenge and call for them.

But they are not all necessary to be particularly and expressly insisted on in the Time of Communion, They will be all implied 'tis true, and virtually contained in what is then done; but they are not all necessary to be particularly insisted on. And for this there is a very good Reason, because that Time doth not ordinarily allow sufficient Space for the same. For most Communicants are not of such active Minds and quick Apprehensions, as that they can pursue so many Businesses, or work themselves up into an express Fervour of so many particular Tempers at one Exercise. And those that are, chuse rather often-times to fix upon some few, that so, having the more time to stay upon

upon them, they may raise themselves up to greater Degrees, and act them over in much higher Measures. And because, where all cannot be exercised, it is of great use to know which are best and fittest to be singled out, I shall here set down which of all those Tempers I conceive it were most proper to stir up at that time, and vigorously to exert and heighten in our own Minds.

If any then, who come to the Holy Communion, find that they are either *tired out* with the length, or *distracted* by the *variety* of many Particulars, and that their Devotion in this Feast goes better on, and is more full and perfect when they restrain it to a *few*; I think they may do well to lay it out in these that follow.

In *remembering* our Saviour Christ, who, as then we are to believe, *died* for us, and purchased us the *New Covenant* by his Death, offering us the Pardon of our Sins upon our true Repentance, and his Grace and Holy Spirit to help on our sincere Endeavours, and Eternal Life upon our intire Obedience: In remembering him, I say, we may do well to shew.

1. A *joyful* and *affectionate Thankfulness* for this his unspeakable Love and Benefits, particularly for his Dying for us.

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2. *An intire Resignation of our selves,* both Souls and Bodies, *to his use,* as they are his own Purchase: In which *two* consists the main Worthiness of this Part, they being the Things which are most becoming us in this Remembrance.

And in *confirming the New Covenant* with Almighty God, whereto we must believe we are then invited, we may act,

3. *Repentance of all our Sins,* particularly of all those which we find are most apt to win upon us; and *make him Promises* that in all the Instances of Duty, but in them especially, we will joyn our Endeavours to his Grace, and obey his Righteous Laws, and when we promise this, it must be with a *sincere* and *faithful* Heart, and with full intentions of Performance, which are the great Duty incumbent on us in these Engagements.

And in *confirming a League of Love* and *Friendship with all our Brethren*, which we must think with our selves that we are then called to likewise, we may exercise,

4. *Charity towards all Persons,* forgiving all who have any ways offended us, and laying aside all Envy, Strife, and malicious Thoughts, and resolving to shew Kindness both in Word and Deed to all about us, nay to all Men, as we have ability and opportunity, but to the Poor  
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especially, who ought not to be forgotten at such times; which is the Great Thing required of us, and becoming us in this part of the Service.

So that when we come to the Holy Communion, where we are called to remember Christ, particularly in his Death, to seal the New Covenant with God, and a League of Friendship with our Brethren; we may do well to express our selves joyfully and affectionately thankful for all his Kindnesses, especially that of his Dying for us, and resign up our selves, both Souls and Bodies, to his Service, and repent of all our Sins, making him faithful and unfeigned Promises of our amendment of the same, particularly of those wherein we are most liable to do amiss, and shew our selves in Peace and perfect Charity with all Persons. By these things we shall duly answer the Ends of this Feast, and in them lies the great Worthiness of our Carriage at it. And this our Church has sufficiently intimated to us in her Publick Catechism, when in return to that Question, *What is required of them that come to the Lords Supper?* It gives this Answer; *To repent them truly of all their Sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new Life; to have a lively Faith in Gods Mercy thro' Christ* (which, as we have seen, is thorowly exercised from the

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*beginning to the end of this Holy Sacrament) to have a thankful Remembrance of his Death, and be in Charity with all Men.*

When we come therefore to the Holy Sacrament, whilst the *Minister* himself is Communicating, or whilst *others* are Receiving, we may lay out our selves on these things, and spend the time in the Exercise of these Duties, acting them over in Devout Prayers and Holy Meditations by our selves. Or if we are not able of our selves, but need the Help of others to suggest Thoughts, and to go along with us in this Service, let us joyn heartily in the *Churches Prayers*, which it has appointed for this purpose. For in them we have an Exercise of all these Virtues, and they have excellently provided for our Needs in this Case; so that we may duly express these Tempers, if we are careful to joyn fervently with the Minister in all the Parts of the *Communion-Service*. And because it may be of use to some, to see how all these Duties are exercised in it, that so, being aware of it, they may particularly design them when they come to it; I will shew it of them all particularly.

I. It leads us on to an *affectionate Thankfulness* and *joyful Praise*, the first great Qualification, in a strain which

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truly to me is most transporting. For thus it helps us to give Thanks before Receiving. It is very meet, right, and our bounden Duty, that we should at all Times, and in all Places, give Thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God: Therefore with Angels, and Archangels, and all the Company of Heaven, we laud and magnifie thy Glorious Name, evermore praising thee. and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, Heaven and Earth are full of thy Glory: Glory be to thee, O Lord most High.

And thus again after it:

Glory be to God on High, and in Earth Peace, and Good Will towards Men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorifie thee, we give Thanks to thee for thy great Glory, O Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord the only Begotten Son Jesus Christ, O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the Sins of the World, have Mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the Sins of the World, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the World, receive our Prayers. Thou that sittest at the Right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us

For thou art only Holy, thou only art the Lord, thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost

*Ghost, art most high in the Glory of God the Father.*

All which are words expressing joy, *Praise* and affectionate *Thankfulness*, somethingly, that better, I think, have not yet been thought of.

2. It leads us also to *resign up our selves*, both Souls and Bodies to his Service, in the Prayer immediately after receiving, in these words.

*And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our Souls and Bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively Sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee, that all we who are partakers of this Holy Communion, may be fulfill'd with thy Grace and Heavenly Benediction.*

3. It leads us in professing an humble and hearty Repentance of all our sins, and making God our Faithful promises of new Obedience, in the Invitation to Communicate, and in the Confession of Sins before receiving, in these words.

*Ye that do truly and earnestly Repent you of your Sins, and intend to lead a new Life, following the Commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his Holy Ways; draw near with Faith, and take this Holy Sacrament to your Comfort, and make your humble Confession to Almighty God, meekly kneeling upon your Knees,*

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c. We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most greivously have committed, by Thought, Word, and Deed, against thy Divine Majesty, &c. We do earnestly Repent, and are heartily sorry for these our mis-doings, &c.

And to prepare us for this profession of Repentance in *this place* of the Service, I think it very adviseable to take what time there is, whilst the Bread and Wine are in preparing before the beginning of the Office, to recollect our particular Sins which we are most liable to incur, and at every one of them to make God promises, and fix Resolutions of amending them in our Minds, after which we may the better say in *General* we Repent of them, and will no more commit the same; and thereupon beg Pardon for them, and receive Absolution, as it is in this part of the Service.

4. And lastly, it leads us to act Peace and Charity towards all Men, when in the Exhortation before Receiving, it tells us we must be in perfect Charity with all Men; and in the Invitation, calls such as are in Love and Charity with all their Neighbours: At which Words our Hearts may strike in with it, and earnestly profess,  
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that they at present are, and are fully resolved at all times afterwards so to be.

Thus doth the Church it self in our *Publick Service*, go before us ; and lead us on in these great Duties of joyfull *Praise and Thankfulness*, of *Resignation* of our selves, of *Repentance* and *Faithful purposes and promises of Obedience*, and of *Charity to all Persons*, which are to render us welcom Guests, and worthy Communicants. Nay, it doth not only call us to, and bear us Company in these Chief Duties, wherein above all consists a *Receiver's Worthiness*, but also in most others mentioned above, so that scarce any Duty is requir'd in us at this Feast, but, in our Hearts go along with the Office, it puts the same in act, and makes a place for it.

It exercises our humble sense of our own *Unworthiness* in the Prayer before *Consecration*, in these Words. We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our *Righteousness*, but in thy manifold and great *Mercies*. We are not worthy so much as to gather the Crumbs under thy Table. And so again in the Prayer after *Receiving*, in these. Tho' we be unworthy through our manifold Sins, to offer up unto thee any Sacrifice; yet humbly we beseech thee, accept this our bounden Duty and Service.

Service; not weighing our Merits, but pardoning our Offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

It exercises our Hatred and Abhorrence of our Sins, which caused Christ's Sufferings; in the Confession of Repentance, in these. The remembrance of our mis-doings is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable.

And it exercises our Love, and Reverence, and Honour to Christ, either in words that express it, or in things that imply it, being real proofs and effects thereof, in every thing that is done through the whole Service.

If every Receiver therefore who has these Tempers, doth but go along heartily and affectionately with the Churches Prayers, and joyn with the Minister and the Congregation in the Communion Service; he acts them over as he ought, and doth Honour to his Saviour, and is a worthy Communicant. He shews all those qualifications which God has required, and receives as a worthy Guest, if he can do nothing more than go along, and strike in heartily at every part of the Publick Worship. And if, when he wants Help and Employments for his Thoughts, he joyn heartily in the Prayer, which is made at the offering of the Bread and Wine to o-

thers, either before or after he has received the same himself. Which I speak not for the ease of those, who, either by *their own invention*, or the *Help of Books*, can set their own minds on work, and employ their own Thoughts in meditating and acting over all these Tempers whilst the Minister is distributing the Blessed Sacrament: I speak it not, I say, for the ease of these Persons, as if, beside what they do in the Churches Prayers, they should not moreover do what they can otherwise. But for the sake of others who have not these Abilities, that they may not be discouraged; and to let them know, that, if they are good Men and have these Tempers, there is exercise of them sufficient in the *Publick Prayers*, were there nothing else from the help of *Books*, or their own *Invention*, to make them *worthy Communicants*.

And thus we see wherein lies the *worthiness of receiving*, and what Virtues are fit for him to exercise, who would be a *welcom Guest* at the *Holy Communion*. When he remembers the *Death of Christ*, and confirms the *New Covenant* with *Almighty God*, and a *League of Love and Friendship* with all the *Christian World*, by *eating Bread*, and *drinking Wine* according

to Christ's appointment he must exercise himself in *joyful Praise*, and *affectionate Thanks*, and *Resignation of his whole man*, both Soul and Body, to *Christ's Service*, and in *Repentance of all his Sins*, making God faithful Promises of *New Obedience*, and in *Charity towards all Persons*: All which he may express in joyning heartily with the *Churches Prayers*, besides what he doth, whilst the Bread and Wine are in preparing, or whilst others are Communicating, in his own *Meditations*. And if he believes these things, and is carried on by such Belief to these performances; he is welcom to the Table of our Lord, and may justly esteem himself a worthy Partaker of this Blessed Sacrament.

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## C H A P. IV.

*Worthy Receiving not extraordinary difficult, and of unworthiness to Commnnicate.*

### The Contents

*To silence the Complaint of extraordinary Difficulty of coming worthily to this Sacrament, three things noted. 1. All the par-*

particulars of worthy Receiving, are necessary parts of Duty, and of a good Man; so that no more is required to fit us for receiving the Holy Sacrament, than is required to fit us to die, or to go to Heaven. 2. They are all necessary Qualifications of an acceptable Prayer, Vow or Thanksgiving; so that no more is required to it, than to a worthy discharge of all other acts of Religion. 3. However they may be commended, yet are they not necessarily required, in more intense and transporting degree in it, than in other instances of Devotion. The only unworthiness, which can put us by this Ordinance is Impenitence: if Repentance will go down with any man, nothing else need stick with him. This Point of Worthy Communicating sum'm'd up.

**H**AVING hitherto shewn wherein the worthiness of Receiving lies, and what those Qualifications are which fit us for this Holy Feast: I shall now only note some things, that may silence all good Mens Complaints about the hardship thereof, and shew plainly who they are that are unworthy to joyn in it, and what they must do to fit and prepare themselves for it, and so conclude this Point.

1<sup>st</sup>, I shall note some things that may reconcile all good Minds to this Feast, and silence the Complaints of the hardship and extraordinary difficulty of coming worthily to partake in it.

And

And this had need to be done, and may prove of great use when once it is done; because one *Chief* thing, which causes even good People to come so seldom, is the apprehended difficulty, and extraordinary solemnity of the worthy Receiving.

Now to satisfy all good Souls in this point, and to remove these hard thoughts of it, I would suggest to them these three Things.

1st, That all these Tempers, which are required to a worthy Communion, are necessary parts of Duty, and of a good Man; so that no more is required of us to fit our selves for receiving the Holy Sacrament, than is required to fit us to die, or to go to Heaven.

They are all necessary part of Duty, and of a good Man. It is necessarily required of every good Man, who would serve God and be accepted with him, that he <sup>1</sup> honour his Lord and Master Jesus Christ, and be careful to <sup>2</sup> obey him; that he be <sup>3</sup> affectionately sensible of all the Kindnesses which he has done, particularly in Dying for him, and most heartily <sup>4</sup> thank him for the same; that he be <sup>5</sup> humbled under the sense of his own sins,

<sup>1</sup> Phil. 2. 9, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Luc. 6. 46.

<sup>3</sup> Jam. 1. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Eph. 5. 20.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. 5. 3.

<sup>a</sup> Prov. 8. 13. and utterly <sup>a</sup> *abhor* them;  
 and *reſign up himſelf* both  
<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor. 6. <sup>b</sup> Soul and Body, to his Sa-  
 19, 20. <sup>b</sup> viours uſe, who has bought  
 and made a Purchase of  
 him with his own hearts  
<sup>c</sup> Mar. 16. 16. Blood; that, having <sup>c</sup> *ſirſt*  
<sup>c</sup> *Believed in Chriſt*, he *ſer-*  
*erely conſent to the Terms of the new Cove-*  
*nant*, and enter into it, *Per-*  
<sup>d</sup> Luc. 13. 3. *forming and Promiſing* that  
<sup>e</sup> Phil. 2. 12. *Repentance*, <sup>e</sup> *Good En-*  
<sup>f</sup> Heb. 5. 9. *deavours*, and <sup>f</sup> *Obedience*  
 which are required by it,  
 in expectation of that *Forgivenefs*, *Grace*,  
 and *Eternal Happinefs* which are propoſed  
 therein; and laſtly, that  
<sup>g</sup> Gal. 5. 20, he ſhould <sup>g</sup> *lay aſide* all  
 21. *Envy and malicious Thoughts*  
<sup>h</sup> Mat. 6. 15. and <sup>h</sup> *forgive Injuries*,  
<sup>i</sup> Ezek. 33. 14, <sup>i</sup> *repair Wrongs*, be at  
 15. <sup>k</sup> *Peace*, and live in  
<sup>l</sup> Rom. 12. 13. <sup>l</sup> *Charity* with all the  
<sup>l</sup> Col. 3. 14. *World*. All theſe are  
 Duties indifpenſably re-  
 quired by the *Gospel of Chriſt*, as appears  
 by the places referr'd to in the *Margin*;  
 they are no indifferent things, but are ab-  
 ſolutely neceſſary in every *Chriſtian*, who  
 would ſecure his Peace with God, and be  
 ſure at laſt to go to Heaven. And they as  
 we

Chap. 4. *in the Sacrament.* 99

we have seen, are the very things, which the Worthiness of Communicating consists of. So that to be *personally worthy* for the Communion, is *nothing more*, than to be an acceptably *Good and Religious man*: To have all those Virtues which constitute a *Saint*, and are necessary parts of that Obedience and Holy Living, which must get us all an *Interest in Christ*, and secure our *Title* to Eternal Salvation. And therefore if any man is contented with those Duties, which God exacts of him to make him a good Man; he has no cause to complain of those, which are necessary to a worthy Receiving. And if he doth repine at them, and refrain from the Lords Table, because he will not be at the pains to acquire them; 'tis plain, that 'tis not the *hardship of the Sacrament*, but of an *Holy Life*, that he is disturbed at; and the same difficulties which drive him from the *Communion*, if he understand himself, must drive him also out of his *Religion* and the way to *Heaven*:

2ly, *These Duties*, which are required to a *Worthy Receiving*, are required also to every *Worthy Prayer, Vow, and Thanksgiving*; so that *no more Duties* are required to our *worthiness in this Holy Feast*, than to our *worthiness in all other acts of Religion*. For unless a man *Repents of all his Sins*,



and is in *Love and Charity* with all his *Neighbours*, and *Believes in Christ* and his *Promises*, and is *ready and resolv'd* to obey all his *Commandments*; and, in one word, unless he is a *Good man*, which fits him for a worthy receiving: he is not more worthy to *say his Prayers*, to give *Thanks*, to *make Vows* to God, or *seal Covenants* with him, than he is to joyn in the *Holy Communion*.

He is not more worthy to *say his Prayers*; for to the acceptance of them, all the same things are required of him. *If I regard Iniquity in my heart*, says the *Psalmist*, i. e. if I do not *Repent* of it, and turn away from it, *the Lord will not hear me*, *Psal. 66. 18.* And if men would pray as they ought, says *St. Paul*, and as they may hope to be heard, they must have both *Faith, Peace, and Innocence* to commend their *Petitions*, or *lift up holy hands without wrath and doubting*, *1 Tim. 2. 8.* *If you forgive not men their Trespases*, says our *Saviour*, *neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you your Trespases.* So that when ye pray, say,—*forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors*, *Mat 6. 12, 15.* God says the same of an ill mans *Prayer*, that he doth of an ill mans *Communicating*, namely, that he is most *unworthily* in both, and shall receive a *Curse* instead of a *Blessing*.

sing. For as the *Unworthy*, i. e. as has been shewn, the *Wicked Receiver* (the *Worthiness* required being only that of a good man) *Eats and Drinks his own Damnation*, 1 Cor. 11. 29. So it is said of the *Unworthy*, i. e. of the *wicked Petitioner* too, that *he who turns away his ear from hearing the Law, even his Prayer shall be an abomination*, Prov. 28. 9. and 15. 8.

Thus is every man, who is *Unworthy* to receive the *Blessed Sacrament*, *unworthy* also to pray to God, the same thing being required to both: an *Impenitent ill Man*, being utterly unfit for both, but a truly *Penitent Good Man*, being such as he accounts *worthy*, and most affectionately invites to them.

Nay, he is not only *unworthy* to pray to God, but also, whilst that *Impenitence* lasts, to give him *Thanks*, to make *Vows*, to *Covenant* with him, or to have any *Intercourse* and *Communication* with his *Divine Majesty* in any other *Actions of Religion*. If he tells God that he is *Thankful* for his *Mercies*, whilst in the constant course of his *Life* he *disobeys* him; his *Actions* plainly give the *Lye* to his *Words*, and proclaim him a most *Ungrateful Person*. If he makes him *Vows* and *Promises*, and *Covenants* to *Repent* of all his *Sins*, whilst he still lives *Impenitent*, and  
goes

goes on in them; he only speaks him fair, intending no such thing, and therefore doth nothing else but *abuse* and *provoke* him. He doth nothing that Honours God as it should, so long as he is an ungodly Man, nor must hope in any Services or Religious Performances, to be own'd and accepted by him. For God will have nothing to do with ill Men in any way, whilst they continue impenitent in their Sins; Christ has purchased no Reconciliation for such, nor will he, till they change that course, have any Friendship for them, or take any Complacence in them. He will hear the Prayers, and accept the Thanks, and trust the Promises and Engagements of those only, who are fully resolv'd to amend their Lives, and become Good men: so that if any man persists impenitent, which unfits him for receiving, he is also unfit for every thing else, and unworthy to perform any other Actions of Religion.

As for this business of *worthy Communicating* then, there is no more cause of Complaint against it, for the *difficulty* and *hardship* thereof, than there is against *all Religion*. The same Duties which are required to a worthy Receiving, are no less required to make any of us a good Man; to confer a Right to Heaven, to a worthy

thy Prayer, Promise, or Thanksgiving. So that if any Man will not come to the Sacrament, because he is wicked, and will not be at the pains to attain those Vertues which are necessary to a worthy Communion: if he understands himself, he must for the same reason keep back from Prayers, and Praises, and all pretences to Religion. For unless he will labour after these Duties, and perform them, he is unmeet to come to God, and is very unworthy in all of them. And therefore so long as he is *unfit for the Holy Sacrament*, he is *unfit for every thing else*, and if he resolves to continue so, may as well resolve to renounce his *Baptism*, and the whole *Christian Profession*.

And as these Tempers, which are required to a worthy Communion, are no more than is required in every Good man, in every worthy Prayer, Praise, or other act of Religion: So is it to be observed,

3ly, That *however they may be commended, yet are they not necessarily required, as some have imagined, in more intense and transporting Degrees in it, than they are in other Instances of Devotion.*

That which has deterr'd good People from the Blessed Sacrament, more than any thing besides, is *their too awful Sense and Veneration thereof*, and placing it at too  
great

great a distance from other parts of *Worship*. They think no Virtues are worthy of it, but what are expressed in *Ecstacie* and *Transport*; and that when it requires the same Duties with other parts of God's Service, it requires them in *much greater Perfection*, and *far higher measures*. So that they imagine they may be worthy to Pray, and Praise God, though they are unworthy to Communicate: And therefore they joyn in *them* ordinarily as there is occasion for them, when, through the excess of Reverence, they scarce ever joyn in *this* at all.

But this is a great Mistake, which, though it be well meant, has a very ill effect, and affrights good Souls from performing this Duty and Service, and paying this Honour to their Saviour, when they have no cause to be afraid of it. For although it be commendable and desirable, when it can be had; yet it is not absolutely necessary that so it should be.

It is very commendable, I say, and much to be desired, that we should exercise these Tempers in a higher Degree in this Holy Sacrament, than in other parts of *Worship*. It will be very well if our Prayers are more fervent, and our Praises more affectionate, and if all the Virtues which we have place to exercise, are more full and flagrant  
then,

then, than at other times. For there we have *Christ's Death* represented, with the *hainousness* of our *Sins* which caused it, and the *inestimable Benefits* that come by it; and we meet on purpose, to fix our Thoughts and Contemplation on it. And that is the Consideration, which gives greatest Force, and adds most Strength to all our Duties; so that when we come for that very Intent, it very well becomes us for the Honour thereof to excel in them. And upon this account it will be very Commendable, and much to be Desired, that we should be more vigorous in all our Virtues at *this*, than at any other Ordinance.

But although this be Commendable, and much to be Desired in us; yet it is not necessary, or indispensably required of us, but that we may Communicate worthily when 'tis otherwise. For we have these Tempers in such a Degree, as is necessary to our *Eternal Happiness*; we have so much of them; as will render us worthy and welcome Guests at *this*, as well as at every other Ordinance of *Christ*.

And this is plain from hence, because when we have them in a *saving Degree*, which would procure our acceptance in other Parts of Gods Service, they fit us for the Communion of *Christ*, and of  
Glori-

*Glorified Saints in Heaven*; and so cannot leave us unworthy to Communicate with him, and them here on *Earth*. If we *save*ly repent us of all our Sins, and are *save*ly thankful for all *Christ's Mercies*, and are *save*ly in Charity with all our Neighbours, and have a *save*ing Faith in *Christ's Promises*; whether these Virtues be at the pitch of the *Strong*, or only of the *Weak in Faith*, we are accepted with him, since he accepts both. And when once he accepts us, we may approach to him in any Place; when he allows of the measure of our Graces, we may be welcom to shew them forth, and offer a Sacrifice of a sweet Smell, when we send them up to him in *any*, or in *all* the Parts of his Worship and Service.

Let a Man come then to the Holy Communion, though it be without any thing of *extraordinary* and unwonted Transports, and only in that *ordinary* Exercise of these Virtues, which gains him acceptance in Prayer, or Praise, or other *Religious Actions*; and then let him not doubt, but that, although more were better, yet is this good, and will render him a worthy partaker of the Lord's Supper.

And this, as we have great cause to believe, the *Ancient Christians* thought, because

cause they made it not an extraordinary separate thing, as we do now, but an ordinary and constant part of the Christian Worship. It went usually along with the other Parts of the Service, and they who came to Prayers, came also to the Blessed Sacrament; the same Preparations, and the same Persons, being admitted to both. That, in the Apostles times, they met to Communicate, as they met to Pray, every Day; and breaking Bread, was no less constant a part, than Prayer, and Praise, of their Communion and Fellowship. All the Disciples at Jerusalem, says St. Luke, continued steadfastly in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers, Act. 2. 42. And again, They continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking Bread from house to house, did eat their Meat with Gladness, and singleness of Heart, praising God, v. 46, 47. And afterwards, when their Members increased, and Stated Days were appointed for the publick Service of God; on the first Day of the Week, when they met for other Worship, the Communion always went along therewith. Thus 'tis plain it was in the Apostles Days, for then the Sunday Worship was expressed by breaking Bread; which shews, that it was an ordinary and constant part thereof. On the



the first Day of the Week, says St. Luke, when the Disciples came together to break Bread. Act. 20. 7. And thus also it continued for a good while afterwards, as is evident from the Ninth Canon of the Apostles. And to shew how fit they esteemed all the Faithful, whether Weak or Strong in Faith, who were worthy to joyn in other parts of Worship, to joyn also in this; that Apostolical Canon requires all the Faithful, who come to the other Service, to stay the Communion, and to

π Πάντας τοὺς  
οἱ σιόντας πιστοὺς,  
καὶ τὴν γενομένην ἀ-  
κρόασην, μὴ πα-  
ραμένοντες δὲ τῇ  
προσευχῇ, καὶ τῇ  
ἀγίᾳ μεναμένη  
ὡς ἀταξίας ἐμμε-  
νῶντας τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ  
ἐφορῶνται χρῆ.  
Canon. 9. Can.  
Apostol.

π Πάντας τοὺς  
οἱ σιόντας εἰς τὴν  
ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ τῇ ἱε-  
ρωῶν γενομένην ἀκ-  
ρόασην, μὴ κοινω-  
νῶντας δὲ ἐκείνης ὁμα-  
κῶ λαῶν ἢ ἀποσε-  
πομένους τῇ ἀγίᾳ  
ἐκκλησίᾳ.

joyn in that also. All the Faithful, that come to Church and hear the Scriptures, but stay not to joyn in the Holy Communion and the Prayers for that Service, ought to be separated and shut out from the Lord's Table, as they that bring Confusion into the Church. And the like is also enjoyn'd in the Council of Antioch. All that come to Church, say they, and hear the Scriptures, but do not Communicate in the Peoples Prayers, but turn away disorderly from the En-  
cha-

charist, shall be Excommunicated and Expell'd the Church, and not receiv'd again, till they confess their Fault, and shew Repentance for it.

Concil. Antioch. Can. 2.

χαριστίας καὶ τῆς  
ἐκκλησίας, τῶν τῶν  
ἐκκλησίας, ὡς ἂν  
ἐξομολογησάμενοι,  
καὶ δεξάμενοι κατὰ  
τὴν ἐκκλησίαν.

And thus we see, however *Commendable* it may be, that People should come to this Holy Sacrament, with more intense Acts, and higher preparation, than would serve it to any other parts of Worship; yet that is not *necessary* they should do so. They may be welcome and *Worthy* Partakers in this Ordinance, who are worthy to partake in others; so that they are fit for it, who are fit for any other Religious Service. The *same* Virtues, and the *same* Degrees may suffice thereto. For they fit them to Communicate with *Christ* and with *Glorified Saints in Heaven*, and so must needs fit them to Communicate with *him*, and *them* here on *Earth*. They fitted Christians for it in the *Apostles* times, when the *Eucharist* was no extraordinary and separate, but an ordinary constant part of the *Christian* Worship. For then, not only they whose Virtues were most high and perfect, but *all the Faithful* were call'd upon to Communicate; and they who were

were judg'd fit to meet at the Prayers and other Services, were thought Worthy to meet at the Lords Table too. And since they fitted *them* for it in those Days, it cannot be thought, but that they must needs fit us for the same in ours also.

As for those then, who have been wont to think more hardly of the Holy Sacrament than of other parts of Worship, and how frequent soever they were in them, to come but seldom unto it, by reason of the apprehended difficulty in a Worthy partaking thereof: If they duly consider these *three* things they will see cause to change their mind, and forbear to complain any more against it. For the *Virtues which are required of us in a worthy Communion*, are all necessary parts of Duty, and of a Good man; and are as much required to a worthy Prayer, Vow, Thanksgiving, and every other act of Religion; and are not necessarily required in more intense and transporting Degrees in it, than they are in other instances of Devotion. So that no Good man has any cause at all to repine at it, or abstain from it. It lies hard upon, and can be blamed by none, but those, who for the same Reason, must blame every other Ordinance and part of Divine Service, which requires as much of a worthy Worshipper

as this doth; and who, at the same Rate as they cast off it, must renounce their Christianity, and throw aside all Religion too.

And thus having noted some things, which may help to reconcile all good minds to this Blessed Sacrament, and silence the Complaints of hardship in a worthy receiving of the same: I shall proceed now,

2ly, To shew plainly who are unworthy of it, and what they must do to fit and prepare themselves for it, and so conclude this Point.

Now these, in one word, are all that are impenitent, or that have committed any wilful or Damning Sin, and are not fully set against it and purposed to amend it. For all the Virtues of Worthy Receiving, as we have seen, are necessary Parts of Duty, and of a Good man; so that if any Person, would Repent of all his breaches of those Duties, and take care thenceforward to endow his Soul with them, he would be worthy to be entertained at this Feast, and fit to be bidden welcome. Besides, if Repentance and forsaking all his Sins will go down with him, there is no man who pretends to Religion, but may perform every thing else, which is required to this Communion. For there would

would be no great difficulty in *paying Christ Honour and Reverence, and following him with Love and Thankfulness, and resigning our selves up to his use, and abhorring of our Sins, if Repentance and Reformation were not annexed to them. Men could Love Christ heartily, and Thank him freely, and Honour him abundantly, and resign themselves up to him wholly, and Believe in him chearfully, if he would not peremptorily require them to amend their ways, and forsake their sins, which are the things they place their chiefest Pleasure and Delight in. So that if any man will not fit himself for Receiving, it is not for the difficulty of other Duties, as if he could not brook them; but only for the difficulty of Repentance, so that impenitence is truly at the bottom. He will not satisfy those who have suffered by him, or forgive those who have injured him, or be at Peace and live in Charity with all Men, or renounce that Injustice, Lasciviousness, Drunkenness, or other known sin, Which, in confirming the New Covenant, he must promise God that he will depart from. It is because his Heart sticks to some of these, or some other such like Transgressions, and will not go off from them, that he is an unfit and unworthy man; whereas, were it not for this, he could do all things else which are required of him,*

He

He therefore, who is unworthy to Communicate, and unfit to receive the Holy Sacrament, is plainly one who is *impenitent*; who is guilty of some Damning Sin, and is not resolv'd yet to leave it, but intends still to continue in the same. He is either a *careless Man*, that lives at large in a constant course of *Sensuality* and *Worldliness*, being wholly given to *heap up Wealth*, or *aim at Honour*, or *follow Pleasure*, *without Conviction*, or making any pretence at all to serious Religion; Or, if he seems to look towards God, and is careful in *many* things to please him; yet he serves him not in *all* points as he ought, but allows himself in *some known Sin*, continuing unreclaimed in *common Swearing*, *Drunkenness*, *Uncleanness*, *Malice*, *Contentiousness*, *Fraud*, *Oppression*, *Slander*, *Censoriousness*, *Evil speaking*, or some other Damning Crime, which he will not be at the pains to leave for Christ's sake, or for any thing that he Either *has Done*, or *would do* for him.

Now if any one of those, who read this Treatise, are such as these, and I put the matter to their *own Consciences*; I confess they are not worthy to come to the Holy Sacrament, till they turn away from such known Sin, and Repent of the same, and would Sin against this Holy Feast and  
their

their own Souls, if they should partake therein before they have done so. But then I must tell them withal, that as they are not fit to come to this Holy Ordinance so, whilst they continue in that Estate neither are they fit to come to any other, or to any thing else that looks towards God, and their own Eternal Happiness. For so long as they thus espouse any Number of Sins, or any one Sin against God, and daily repeat it when they have a Temptation to it, notwithstanding their own Hearts are sensible that he has forbid it, or at least would have been sensible thereof, unless they had been wilfully blinded, or by long use harden'd therein: So long, I say, as they are thus *Impenitent in any known Sin*, they are not only *unfit to come to the Holy Communion*, but are also as *unfit to Die*; or to go to Heaven, to Pray to God, to utter Praises, to make Vows to him, or to join in any other Actions of Religion. For an *Impenitent Man*, whilst he continues such, is God's *Profest Enemy*, and is welcom to him at no time but when he *Repents*; so that till that is done, he is acceptable in no Service which he pays him.

This then is the Danger of their State, who lie *Impenitent in many*, or in *few known*

known Sins: they are unworthy indeed to receive the Holy Communion; but they are equally unworthy to joyn in Prayers, to give Thanks, or make Vows, or die in Peace, or hope for Happiness, or do any thing else that shews them to be Christians.

And if any mans Conscience tells him, that this is *his State*; his way is not to think there is no harm, if he doth but *abstain from the Communion*; for, as I say, he is as unworthy in his Prayers, and Praises, and in every thing else that belongs to Religion: but *forthwith to Repent*, and *amend that Transgression*, which shuts him out from the Holy Sacrament, and from every thing else that looks towards Heaven, that so he may be *Worthy*, and find Acceptance, both in *it*, and in *them* too. This Repentance will restore him to the Favour of God, and gain him acceptance with him; and then he is fit for this, and for every other part of God's Worship and Service, and may worthily joyn in any of them.

And by this it appears, who is unworthy of this Feast, and what he must do to fit and prepare himself for it. Every man who is Impenitent, is an unworthy Communicant; but if he will seriously Repent and Amend his ways, he will find



no difficulty in any other Duties which make up a Believers Worthiness, but may then be a Worthy and Welcom Guest whensoever he has a mind to come to the Lord's Table.

And thus I have done with the *Second Thing* which I proposed, namely to shew *wherein the Worthiness of Eating and Drinking at this Feast lies*; which I have stayed the longer upon, because both the *irreverent Approach* of some Men to it, and the *scrupulous Abstaining* of others from it, do both take rise from this Head, so that it well deserves to be carefully Explain'd and clearly Stated.

And thus, having endeavoured to give some help to all those, who desire to *Communicate worthily*, by shewing *what is the meaning of Eating Bread and Drinking Wine in the Blessed Sacrament*, and *wherein the worthiness of doing it lies*: I shall proceed now in the third Place, to *exhort and press Men on to it*, by shewing them *how much it is every good Christians Duty to frequent the same*, and *how great the Benefits are that come thereby*, which should make them seek to it of themselves, tho' they were not commanded so to do, of which in the next Part.

## PART. II.

## CHAP. I.

*Of the Duty of Communicating.*

## The Contents.

*To Communicate, is a Duty Incumbent on us, as appears, 1. From the obliging import of the Command about it. This Command of Christ shewn, and several Notes added, which greatly recommend and enforce it, viz. It is such an Instance, as best shews our peculiar Reverence and Love to him. The whole yoke of Jewish Ceremonies is taken away, and only it, and Baptism, two cheap and easie Rites, are imposed instead of them: It was his last Command, he gave it the Night before he suffered: In St. Paul's Commission to Preach the Gospel, it was particularly specified, We cannot neglect it, without greatest danger to our selves, as appears from our Saviours words, Joh. 6. 53. which are shewn to speak of it; and*

from the Danger of Neglecting the Jewish Passover, which answered to it. 2. From the obliging Nature of those things which are meant by it, viz. Because we therein publicly own Christ and his Religion, and solemnly remember him, and confirm the New Covenant with God, and a League of Friendship with our Brethren, and are vouchsafed the highest Honour, and receive Tokens of greatest Love, and enjoyment of present Graces, and pledges of future Glory from him: all which no Good man ought, and no Ingenious man will decline; when he is call'd to them. This Duty obliges those only who are of Age for it; and them too only at such times, as they have an Opportunity and a fit Occasion offered. An Objection against its being a Duty, from 1 Cor. 11. 25. answered. The Neglect of it is a great Sin. This God may excuse in those good Souls, who through Ignorance or Error are held back, and because of their over-high Veneration for it, think themselves unworthy to come to it, whilst in the honesty of their Hearts they thus mistake it. But he will not excuse it in them, when they are better inform'd; and much less in others, who neglected it because they are careless of it, or too Wicked and Impenitent to receive it.

**T**He worthy receiving the Holy Sacrament, which I have hitherto Described, is no Indifferent thing, which may either be done, or let alone according  
to

to Discretion; but an *indispensable Duty*, wherein God has straitly bound, and which he has peremptorily required of every grown Christian.

And this will appear these two ways.

1<sup>st</sup>, From the *Expressiveness*, and *Obliging Import*, of the Command about it.

2<sup>ly</sup>, From the *Obliging Nature* of those things, which are meant by it.

1<sup>st</sup>, That every Christian ought to frequent the Holy Sacrament, and come to it as often as he is call'd, and an opportunity is offer'd for the same, appears from the *Expressness* and *obliging Import* of the Command about it. For our Blessed Lord has given us his Command for it, and that with such particular Notes and Circumstances, as shew that he lays a great weight upon it, which must needs oblige all, who have any just Regard for him, to frequent it.

He has given us, I say, his express Command for it. For thus St. Paul tells us; he did, when he Ordained this Feast. He took Bread, says he, and when he had given Thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat, This is my Body which is broken for you; This DO in Remembrance of me. And after the same manner he took the Cup, saying, This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood; This DO ye, as often as you Drink it, in

remembrance of me. 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25  
 And if we had nothing more than this  
 plain Command for it, it were enough to  
 make every man, who would please God,  
 and go to Heaven, to come thereto when  
 he is invited. For then ye are my Friends,  
 says Christ; when ye do whatsoever I com-  
 mand you. Joh. 15. 14. And he that shall  
 break the least of my Commandments, and  
 shall teach Men so, shall be least in the King-  
 dom of Heaven: i. e. he shall not enter,  
 or have any share at all there, Mat. 5. 19.

But besides this express Command which  
 he has given for it, we have other Notes  
 and Circumstances added, which greatly  
 recommend the same, and shew that he  
 lays a particular weight upon it. For,

1<sup>st</sup>, It is a thing which is to be done pure-  
 ly upon his account, having no other Reason  
 but his Command to bind and enforce it; so  
 that if we have any Love and Reverence  
 for him, this is the best way to shew the  
 same. As for the Duties of Humility,  
 Temperance, Justice, Faithfulness, Grati-  
 tude, Charity, Peace, Prayers to God, and  
 the like: Though Christ has told us of  
 them, and has expressly injoyn'd them, as  
 well as this, yet is not he alone in that,  
 but they were sufficiently proclaimed be-  
 fore he came, to the Jews by Moses and  
 the Prophets, and to the Gentile World by  
 Na

*Natural Conscience.* In declaring *them*, he had an open way made for him, and the Consciences of all Men were ready to strike in with him, which, among all good Minds, would much facilitate their Reception. But in *this* Command, he stands alone; for *Natural Reason* knows nothing of it, nor will the Conscience of any Man, but a *Christian*: oblige him to it. So that here we have no Light but his Word, no Motive but our Obedience to him to perswade it; and therefore if we do it at all, it must be purely for his sake, without any other Inducement.

And this is a strong Bond upon all who *Love their Lord*, and have any *peculiarity of Respect for him*, to observe it. It is the true Cause and Reason, indeed, why some neglect it, who presume to shew this Neglect thereof, and persist securely in the same, because their own Conscience doth not startle at it, and check them so severely for absenting from this Feast, as it doth for Drunkenness, Whoredom, Lyes, Cheating, &c. which have not only *Christs Laws*, but *Natural Reason* also to exclaim against them. And if Men have no Love for their Lord, no peculiar Regard for any things because he *has in-joyn'd* them, or are not duly inform'd of his Command about them, thus it will be.

But

But if any who see that he has made it their Duty to frequent this Holy Table, have any peculiar Love and Regard to him; they will greedily embrace this at the best Opportunity of shewing their Affection to his Service, since therein they can be sway'd by nothing else, and will most readily Communicate, when he calls them so to do.

2ly, *It and Baptism*, those two, cheap and easie Things, are the only positive Commands which our Saviour Christ has laid upon us, when he took off the heavy Toke of the Numerous, Expensive, and Laborious Jewish Precepts; so that out of Natural Equity, and to shew our Thankfulness for such a gainful Exchange, we ought most readily to observe them.

The Jews were loaded with a number of Troublesome and Expensive Rites, which had no Goodness discernable in themselves, nor any thing, but the Revelation made by Moses, to recommend them to their Consciences: Such

° Levit. 11. 7. as the ° forbearing Swines, and several other sorts of Flesh; the washing of their Bodies upon their P touch-  
P Num. 19 13: of any dead Persons, and upon any ° Corporal Unclean-  
° Levit. 15. nesses; the bringing

Offer.

*Offerings and Sacrifice of Fed Beasts, for a return of Thanks, and for Propitiation upon any Offences; and many other cumbersome and costly Rites, which the Apostle calls the Law of Carnal Commandments, Heb. 7. 16. and 9, 10. and weak and beggerly Elements, Gal. 4. 9. which were given in way of Command to them, not because the Things deserv'd it, but only that they might be kept employ'd, as useless Exercises are to Children, to hinder them from more hurtful Work; and so were suited only to the Infancy, and Nonage of the World; Gal. 4. 3.*

But from all this *Burden of Ceremonies; under which, as St. Peter says, they, and their Fathers, groan'd, and were oppress'd; Act. 15. 10. by the coming of Christ, we are most graciously delivered. For he has abolished in his Flesh, i. e. by his Death, wherein he gave his Body for us, the Law of Commandments contain'd in Ordinances, Eph. 2. 15. He has blotted out the Hand-writing of Ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, (hedging in the Church within the Jews; and excluding all us Gentiles) and took it out of the way, nailing it to his Cross, Col. 2. 12. All this Law of Jewish Ceremonies he has abrogated, and procur'd us a compleat liberty and exemption from the same, injoyning us*



only these two cheap and easie Rites, of *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*, instead of it. And if any man has but *Common Ingenuity*, and will return *Equitably* for what is done; and much more, if he has any *grateful Resentments* for so valuable an *Exemption*, he must needs submit with all *Thankfulness* to this gainful *Exchange* and *Imposition*, and run to it with as much forwardness, as any Man would to pay *Twelve pence* in full *Discharge* of *Twenty Pounds*.

- 3ly, This Commandment about the Holy Sacrament, was his *Dying* and last *Command*, he gave it the very *Night* before he suffered. The same night, says *St. Paul*, in which he was betray'd, he took *Bread*, and said, *Take, eat, This do in remembrance of me*, 2 Cor. 11. 23, 24. And this, had it come only in the Nature of a *Request*, and not with the *Authority* of a *Command*, must needs have made it of greatest *Power* with us. For it is great *Inhumanity*, and shews an *hard Heart*, to deny the last *Suit* of a *Dying* Person, though he were a *Stranger* to us; and *base Ingratitude*, and a *Falsification* of all *Friendship*, to throw back the last *Request* of a *Dying* Friend, especially if he is before hand with us, and has done much more than his *Request* comes to for our sakes; and the greatest  
Aggra-

*Aggravation of all Disobedience, to slight the last Will and Words of our Fathers, or Masters, or others who have Right over us, and Power to Command us. And therefore since our Blessed Lord, who came upon Earth for no other End but to do us Service, yea even to lay down his Life for our sakes, after all the Pains and Cost which he has been at for us, has left this as his last Will, and both intreated and injoyned at parting, that we should eat and drink in Remembrance of him: if we have any shame we cannot, and if we profess any Duty, we dare not, and if we have any Love for him we will not neglect it, but come to it out of mindfulness of our gone Friend and departed Lord, as oft as we shall have opportunity so to do.*

4ly, It was thought by Christ to be a Commandment so material, that when St. Paul received his Commission to Preach the Gospel, it was by name inserted, and particularly specified; and this special Designation of it, shews that he was more than ordinarily concerned for it. *I have received of the Lord, says he, or by his Revelation, when I was call'd by him, that which I also deliverd unto you, as from him, namely, that the same night he was betrayed, he took Bread, and said, Take, eat, this is my Body which is broken for you, this do in remembrance of me, 1 Cor. 11. 23, 24.*

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51y, It is a *Command*, which, as the *Scripture* plainly intimates, without great danger to our selves, cannot either be unworthily kept, or neglected.

Without very great and apparent danger to our selves, we cannot come Unworthily to the *Holy Sacrament*. For he that eats and drinks unworthily, says *St. Paul*, eats and drinks *Damnation* to himself, *1 Cor. 11. 29.*

And without a like danger, we cannot neglect, or keep back from it. Except ye eat the *Flesh* of the *Son of Man*, says our *Saviour*, and drink his *Blood*, ye have no *Life* in you, *Joh. 6. 53.* This the *Antient Church*, as is well known, understood generally of eating his *Flesh* in the *Holy Sacrament*; which is the great Reason they give for that Practice so common among them, namely, why *Infants* are to Partake of it. And of this, there is great cause to understand this place. For 'tis hard to think of any thing that can support such full Expressions, as eating of his *Body*, and drinking of his *Blood*; besides eating *Bread*, and drinking *Wine* in the *Holy Sacrament*, which he calls his *Body* and his *Blood*, when he institutes it, *Matth. 26. 26, 27, 28.* And besides, in this very place he directs us to his *Body Crucified*, and given for the *Life of the World*; to shew that the Eating relates to it, as it is so represented, which is

no where done but in the *Holy Eucharist*. *I am the living Bread*, says he, which whoso eats shall live for ever: and the Bread which I will give, i. e. to be eaten, is my Body Crucified, which under that Notion is represented only in the Holy Sacrament, or my *Flesh* which I will give for the Life of the World. And except ye thus eat the *Flesh*, and drink the Blood of the Son of Man, ye have no Life in you, Joh. 6. 51, 52, 53.

This Discourse, indeed, of eating his *Flesh* in the Blessed Sacrament, was before the Sacrament it self was instituted. But so was his Discourse of Baptism to Nicodemus, before Baptism was appointed for the standing Rite, whereby all Mankind should be Christned, Joh. 3. 5. And so was his Discourse to the People, of the Death he should die, by being lifted up, before he was Crucified, Joh. 12, 32, 33. And so was his Discourse of raising up the Temple of his Body after it should be destroyed, before he was raised from the dead, Joh. 2. 19, 21. And so in this very place, was his Discourse of giving his *Flesh* for the Life of the World, which they understood not before he suffered, more than they did this Sacramental eating of his *Flesh* before the Sacrament was appointed, Joh. 6. 51. Our Saviour spake several things by Anticipation, in sundry places, as, from this last instance.

instance, 'tis plain he did in *this*; which though his Hearers did not at that time fully understand, yet they would afterwards. So that when other Reasons evince him to have spoke in this place, of the Sacramental eating of his Body and Blood; the Sacrament's not being yet instituted, is no good Proof or Argument against it.

Thus, is this necessity of *eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood*, as ever we would hope for *Eternal Life* thereby, spoken of the *Lords Supper*, wherein we Feast upon them. And we need not wonder, that it should be spoken thereof: For it is no more, than is expressly spoke of *Baptism*, which is but of equal Rank with it, both being alike Duties, and equally required. For of that 'tis said, *He that Believes, and is Baptized, shall be saved*, Marc. 16. 16. And except a man be born again of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, Joh. 3. 5.

But besides this Proof, of the danger of neglecting the Holy Sacrament, because our Lord tells us *we have no Life in us without it*, it may also appear from the danger of neglecting the Jewish Passover, which answered to it, and was the same to them as this

Feast is to us, wherein  
 † 1 Cor 5. 7. † *Christ our Passover is Sacrificed*

*crificed for us.* And as for the danger of neglecting that, it was great indeed, no less than of being cut off from Israel, which was the Punishment God had threatned thereto. *Whosoever, in the Feast of the Passover eats leaven'd Bread, from the First day to the Seventh day, that Soul shall be cut off from Israel, Exod. 12. 15.*

Thus necessary is it for all men, who would please God, to frequent this Ordinance, and to come to the Holy Sacrament when they are call'd to it. They have *Christs express Command* for it, who, by injoyning it, *has required Obedience in such an instance, as best shews their particular Reverence and Love to him;* and to engage them the more to it, *has freed them from all the load of Jewish Ceremonies, and imposed no heavier burden, than it and Baptism instead of them;* and to make it have the more effect, *has left it among the last words, which he spake to them;* and to shew that it was a matter of no small moment, *would have it expressly specified and inserted in St. Paul's Commission;* and tells them. *That unless they come therein to eat his Flesh, and drink his Blood, they have no Life in them;* and will punish the neglect, or abuse of it, *as he did of the Jewish Passover which answer'd to it, with Excision:* All which shew the *Greatness of the Duty,* and how much it is every

every Man's Concern faithfully to Discharge the same, who would hope to have the *Favour of God*, or to go to *Heaven*.

And as this appears from the *obliging Import*, and *Expressness* of our *Blessed Lord's Command* about it; so doth it,

2ly, From the *obliging Nature* of those things, which are meant by it. For therein we publickly own *Christ* and his *Religion*, and solemnly remember him, and confirm the *New Covenant* with *Almighty God*, and a *League of Friendship* with all our *Christian Brethren*, and are vouchsafed the *Highest Honour*, and receive *Tokens* of the greatest *Love*, and injoyment of present *Graces*, and *Pledges* of future *Glories* from him: all which no *Ingenuous man* will, and no *Good man* ought to refuse, when he is call'd to them.

1st, In the *Blessed Sacrament*, I say, we publickly own *Christ*, and profess his *Religion*. This was always understood to be the meaning of *Feasts on Sacrifices*, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*; they who would eat of the *Sacrifice* offer'd to any *God* or *Idol*, were look'd upon to have *Fellowship* and *Communion* with him, and thereby to own their joyning in that *Worship* and *Service*, which was paid to him. They joyn'd themselves to *Baal-Peor*, says, the *Psalmist*, when they at the *Sacrifices* of the *Dead*, i. e. when they Feasted on those  
Sacri-

Sacrifices which were offerd to the Dead, *Psal.* 106. 28. and *Num.* 25. 1, 2, 3. Thus *St. Paul* tells us it was in the Sacrificial Feasts of the *Jews*, for *they that are of their Sacrifices, were partakers of their Altars.* And thus he tells us it was among the *Gentiles*, and that they who Feasted in the *Idol-Temples* on the *Sacrifices made to Devils*, did thereby declare their Communion with them, and had Fellowship with Devils. And the same is true of the Feast of the *Lords Supper*, which upon this account, he makes parallel to them, and compares with them. In *Israel after the Flesh*, says he, *they who eat of the Sacrifice, are sharers in the Worship, or Partakers of the Altar.* And in the things which the *Gentiles Sacrifice to Devils*, *they who Feast on the Sacrifices, have Fellowship with Devils.* And therefore you that Feast with the Lord at his Table, and thereby have Fellowship with him; must not mix Light and Darkness, Christ and *Belial* together, and, by Feasting with Devils at their Tables, have Fellowship with them too. *You cannot drink the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of Devils; you cannot be partakers of the Lord's Table, and of the Table of Devils;* since that were to unite the most opposite Interests, by holding Fellowship, and professing your  
selves



selves to be the Servants of Christ, and of the Devil also, *Cor. 10. 16, 18, 20, 21.* Our joyning in the Holy Communion, is our avow'd owning of Faith in our Crucified Lord, and of our adherence to him. By eating and Drinking at his Table, of *broken Bread, and Wine poured out*, which are the Representation of his *Death*; we tell it out to all the World, that we are the Servants of that Lord, and Worshippers of that Jesus, who gave himself to be Crucified and to Die for us. As often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, saith St. Paul, ye do shew forth the Lord's Death till he come. Ye

shew forth his Death, i. e.  
 ἡ καταγγέλλετε. ye tell it abroad, and profess to all the World,

that he died for you, and is Lord over you, and that you own him so to be.  
 1 Cor. 11. 26.

Thus is our eating Bread, and drinking Wine at the Lord's Table, an open profession of his Religion, and a Token whereby we give out to all the World, who see what we do, that we belong to him. It is a most solemn sign of our Relation to Christ, and a publick Badge of our being Christians. And this sure no man will decline, when there is a fit occasion, who is not ashamed of his Lord, nor Repents of his Profession. But

if he is really a Follower of Christ, and would be thought one; he will let all the World know it by joyning in this Feast, which is the most Solemn Badge, and Authentick Mark, which Christ has appointed of his Followers.

2ly, In coming to the Holy Sacrament, accordnig to our Lord's appointment, we solemnly remember him, and think of the Relation wherein we stand to him, and of the benefits which we have received from him. Do this, says he, in remembrance of me, 1 Cor. 11. 24 25.

And when he is call'd to remember his most precious Saviour, who has both lived and died to make God his Friend, and to do him Service; there is no Man sure, who has any thing of *Shame*, or *Ingenuity* left in him, who will shew backwardness, and begin to make excuses. For has not he done enough for us, to deserve to be thought of? Do not all the inexpressible Favours which he has gain'd, and all the exquisite Pains which he underwent for our sakes, most justly challenge to be held in Remembrance? He left *unutterable Glories*, and submitted to all sorts of *Earthly Calamities*, and took *unwearied Pains*, and shew'd *Invincible Patience*, and laid down at last *his own Life* to save our Souls: and must all this be forgotten.

gotten now 'tis done, and quite buried in silence? What man of any *Ingenuity*, who has been happy in such a *Friend*, can be  
 • averse to remember him? What man, who has been blessed in such a *Saviour*, can ever decline the Thoughts of him? Unless we will shew our selves *grossly stupid*, or *intolerable proud*, and both ways *Monsters of Ingratitude*; we must needs be ready to Celebrate the Memory of such a Person, when we are call'd to do that Honour to him: and no Person that would be thought a *Man*, much more a *Christian*, must ever refuse to remember his Saviour Christ, and give him Thanks, when in the Holy Sacrament he is call'd to it in Christ's own Name, and by his special Invitation.

3ly, In eating Bread and drinking Wine at the Blessed Sacrament, we *confirm the New Covenant with Almighty God*. In this Feast, as has been shewn, we assure him that we will *Repent of every Sin*, which we can know our selves to be guilty of, as ever we hope that he will *forgive* us; and that we will *endeavour with his Grace* after every *Virtue*, as ever we expect that he should *assist* us; and *obey every one of his Commandments*, as ever we look that he should Crown us with *Eternal Happiness*; and *believe*, that, for *Christ's sake*, we shall

shall have the *Pardon, Grace, and Eternal Life upon these Terms, and not otherwise.* For all these Duties, we give him our Word and Promise; and, on that Condition, for all these Blessings, he gives us his Seal and Assurance back again.

And what Man is there, who pretends to the Name of a *Christian*, who will refuse to do this when he has an Authentick Summons, nay, even a Friendly Invitation? Will he not *Repent*, that he may be forgiven? Nor endeavour after such Graces as he wants, that *God's Holy Spirit* may *h. l.* him to them? Nor obey all his Saviour's Laws, that he may be happy in *Heaven*? Nor believe, that Christ has purchased these Benefits for us at God's hands, upon these Terms; but that without performing them, we shall never have them? If he will not do all this, why doth he make any pretence to Religion? If he is unresolv'd, and suspends about any of these Particulars why doth he profess himself a *Christian*? For these things, are the very Substance of *Christianity*, and the Life and Soul of all Religion. No Man can belong to Christ without them, and when he was *Baptized* and came to him, he solemnly undertook and engaged for them. And therefore if any man will refuse to make God his Engagement of  
this

this *Faith, Repentance, and Obedience*, when he is call'd to *Promise and Profess* them; he revolts from his *Baptismal Vow*, and, if he persists in that mind, may as well renounce his Profession, and turn his back on the whole Christian Religion.

4ly, In eating Bread and drinking Wine at the Lord's Supper, we confirm a *League of Love and Friendship with all our Christian Brethren*; this being one End, as I have shewn, of this meeting; and we being therein to *profess our selves in perfect Peace and Charity with all Men*.

And who now, that owns himself a *Christian*, can seek shifts, and shun this, when God calls him to do it? When his Saviour, who died to make God Friends with him, asks him to be Friends with all the World; can he refuse him? When he invites him to be at Peace with all his Members, and to embrace them all as his Brethren; can he fly both from him and them? If he shun this, he may as well shun every thing else, and quit all claim to his Religion. For by this, says our Saviour, *shall all men know that you are my Disciples, if you have Love one to another, Joh. 13. 35.* And unless ye forgive men their *Trespases*, says he again, *neither will your heavenly Father forgive you yours, Mat. 6. 15.* And he that says he loves God, and yet

yet hates his Brother, saith St. John, is a Lyar, 1 Joh. 4. 20. And if it be possible, saith St. Paul, and as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all Men, Rom. 12. 18. Love, and Peace, and mutual Friendship, and Beneficence, are the great Duties which Christ's Law prescribes, and which all his Followers must be forward at all times to make profession of. And therefore if any man turns away from declaring them; he turns his back off the most Signal Duty of his Religion, and will not come to that, whereby, above all things else, he should declare himself a Christian.

5ly, In Feasting with God at the Holy Sacrament, we are vouchsafed the highest Honour, and receive Tokens of greatest Love, and injoyment of present Graces, and Pledges of future Glory from him; and these no man ought to refuse, when he is call'd to them.

He vouchsafes us the greatest Honour. For he calls us to his own Table, and tells us he is most glad to see us there, and that the oftner we come, the welcomer we shall be to his Supper; he invites us as his own Guests- and thereby seeks our Company and Acquaintance, and treats us as his Friends and Confidants: which Honour is so high, that greater cannot be shewed us. He

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He gives us surest Tokens of the highest Love. For he calls us to Feast upon the Body and Blood of his own Son, i. e. upon those Blessings which the breaking of his Body and the shedding of his Blood procured for Mankind; and shews us plainly, that he is still of the same mind, and is glad, that for our sakes, he parted with him; for his inviting us to eat the Body, and drink the Blood of Christ in this Holy Supper, imports as much as if he should say to us. *Lo! Here my dear and only Son, whom I gave to shed his own hearts Blood a Ransom for your Souls. When I did it, your sins were most provoking, and render'd you utterly undeserveing of it; and since you have received it, you have not been affected therewith as you ought to have been, but have shewed your selves most unthankful for the same. But yet all this doth not make me Repent of what I have done, or grudge you the Benefit of him. I am come here freely to present you with him, and do invite you, and exhort you, nay, intreat you to accept him. Eat his Body, and drink his Blood, i. e. those Benefits and that Expiation which were the purchase thereof; I freely give them without grudging, nay, I shall take it extremely ill if you refuse them. For I would by all means have you receive the advantage of him. I gave him once for you,*  
and

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and now again I give him to you; I am still of the same mind, to part with my own dear Son for your sakes, and to bestow him upon you: I have nothing better, or Dearer, wherewith to present you; but with Him in this Holy Feast I do; and what higher Tokens can I give, of the unbounded Love I bear you?

He gives us present Injoyment of many invaluable Graces. For the Lord's Supper is a Treasury of Blessings, conveying to all those, who worthily partake thereof, the Pardon of their Sins, and Strength against all Temptations, and Heavenly Improvements, or growth in all Virtues, as I shall shew under the next Head,

And lastly, He gives us the surest Pledges of future Glory. For when he offers us his own Son, we may be sure he will not stick at any thing else, since he has nothing that is in any comparable Degree so precious and dear to him, as he is. This Gift is a Faithful Earnest, and certain Pledge of every thing else, which he can give us. For he that parted not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; how shall he not with him give us freely all things? says St. Paul, Rom. 8. 32.

Thus in the Blessed Sacrament, are we vouchsafed the greatest Honour, and receive Tokens of highest Love, and injoyment of

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presence



present Graces, and Pledges of future Glories from Almighty God.

And what Man now will refuse all these, when he is invited to them? Who can turn his back upon that Ordinance, wherein God calls him, that he may give Honour to him, and shew by the highest Tokens how he loves him, and confer upon him present Graces, and give him Pledges of future Glories, and assure him what Regard he has for him, and how happy he intends to make him? *Common Ingenuity, and Good Manners*, nay, every Man's own private Interest and self Advantage, oblige him most readily to embrace such Offers, and not to slight, or so much as slowly to accept of them. So that if any Person really believes, that all this Honour is shewn, this Love is expressed, these Graces given, or these Glories assured to him in the Holy Communion: he must needs think himself highly obliged to come to it, and never cast about to seek shifts, and make excuses, or express a backward and unwilling Mind, when he has an Invitation and an Opportunity so to do.

And thus it appears how much all the Disciples of Christ, who are grown up to it, and understand it, (for no Duty obliges an incapable Subject) are bound to  
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frequent this Holy Sacrament. It is their Duty to come to the Communion, as it is to come to Church, to be Chast, Sober, Humble, Just, or to perform any other Precept of their Religion. For they have their Saviour Christ's express Command for it, who by joyning it, has required Obedience in such an Instance, as best shews their peculiar Reverence and Love to him; and to ingage them the more to it, has freed them from all the load of Jewish Ceremonies, and imposed no heavier burden, than it and Baptism instead of them; and, to make it take the surer effect with them, left it among the last words which he spake to them; and to shew it was a matter of no small moment, would have it expressly specified in St. Paul's Commission; and tells them, That unless they come therein to eat his Flesh and drink his Blood, they have no Life in them; and will punish the neglect, or abuse of it, as he did the neglect of the Jewish Passover, which answer'd to it, with Excision. And the Nature of those things which are meant by it, and of those Employments which are to be exercised at it, most straightly oblige them to it. For therein they shew they have Fellowship with Christ, and appertain to his Religion, and thankfully remember him, and Seal the New Covenant with Almighty God, and a League of Love and Friendship with their Christi-

an Brethren, and are vouchsafed the highest Honour, and receive Tokens of the greatest Love, and enjoyment of present Graces, and Pledges of future Glories from him: which are things, that every Ingenuous man will do, and every Good man ought to do; and which no man, when he is call'd thereto, can honestly decline, who professes himself a Christian.

Thus is it a necessary Duty in every Christian man to come to the Holy Sacrament, as it is to come to Church, or to other parts of Worship: And when once we are of Age for it, and have a fit opportunity and occasion offered of joyning in the same, we are in strict Duty ingaged, and by a bond of many Cords, as we have seen, obliged so to do.

1st, I say, we are bound to it, when once we are of Age for it. The Duty of this Holy Sacrament lies in such things, as suppose a competent Understanding, and due Knowledge of Religion, in those who must discharge them. For therein we are to remember Christ, both what Commands he has left with us, and what he has done and suffered for us; and this we cannot do, till first we have learnt them. We must ingage to be at Peace, to do Justice, and shew kindness to all our Brethren; and this supposes, that we know first what Offices of Love, and Acts of Justice are due to them. We must consent to the Terms of the New Covenant,

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and this implies that, *first* we should understand them. In *Baptism*, indeed, we enter'd into it before we had any knowledge of it; but that was because God, (who deals with us after the most favourable manner of Men, who allow grown Persons to bear the Parts, and federally to undertake for Infants, in things conducing to their Advantage,) admitted our *Sponsors*, who knew it very well, to stand as our *Representatives* and in way of *Proxies*, to Covenant and undertake for us. But the Sacrament of the *Lords Supper*, is to be our *own Act*, and an express assenting in our own Persons to what our *Sponsors* formerly undertook; and this cannot be done till we are come to years, and are able of our selves to judge of it.

Till we are grown up then to the Age of Competent knowledge in Spiritual Affairs, we are not capable of discharging the Duty of this Holy Sacrament aright. And till we are so, we are not obliged to it, since no Duty obliges an *incapable* Subject. For 'tis in *this* Duty, as 'tis in that of *making Peace*, or *giving good Advice*, or any others; they bind us not, till we are grown up to them, and are come to know rightly how to discharge them. For on all these Cases, God exacts an account only of those *Talents* which he has entrusted with us, as we are told in the *Parable* of the men who had

received the Talents, Matth. 25. and his Rule of proceeding is this, *unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required, and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more,* Luc. 12. 48.

2ly, when we are of Age for it, we are bound to it only when we have an opportunity, and a fit occasion is offered. It is in the Communion at the Sacrament, as it is in our Communion in Prayers, and other parts of Worship; we are bound to join in them when they can be had, and when we are not lawfully hindred and diverted from them. But if either there is no place for them, or we are justly hindred from attending on them, we have no obliging opportunity for that time, but may without sin omit them. And thus it is, when we are hindred by some call of Providence, when at that time we are call'd away to do some necessary Duty of Justice, or Charity, in another place. Or when we are detained at home by some Diseases, or bodily Indisposition, under which it is not safe to go abroad, or to venture out beyond our own Chambers; in which case God, who prefers Mercy before Sacrifice when they thwart and interfere with Essential Duties, before positive Precepts, will excuse us. Or, lastly, when our minds are disturbed by great Griefs that cannot presently be cast off, or by sudden Anger

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or *Discontent* occasioned hard before the Reception thereof, (which disturbance of Mind though ordinarily it be our own Fault and culpable, may yet sometimes be more innocent or excuseable;) at which time, since their *Discomposure* unfits them for so Divine a Service, they may for the present omit it, as being indisposed for it. This St. Peter intimates of *Prayers*, (and the Reason is the same of this Ordinance,) when he exhorts the *Husband*, by a discreet compliance, and patient bearing of his *Wives Infirmities*, to prevent all *Peevishness* and *Domestick Quarrels*, that so they may have no need to omit or put by their *Devotions*; which it seems, they would need to do, if their minds were acted at that time by such undue Tempers. Ye *Husbands*, says he, dwell with your *Wives* according to knowledge; giving Honour to the *Wives*, or treating them with Lenity and Care, because they are the *Weaker Vessels*, that your *Prayers* be not hindered by those Heats and Animosities, which very likely might arise otherwise, 1 Pet. 3. 7. And this was once the case of St. † *Chrysostom*, who, at the time of administering the Holy Sacrament, being accidentally much discomposed in mind, by

\* Παράκλησις  
Παράκλησις † Παρ-  
ακλήσις ὡς ἀκούει  
τὰ ὅρα αὐτοῦ  
συγγενῶν τοῖς  
λοιποῖς ἐπισκόποις  
Πατριᾶς καὶ ὁ  
ἴδιος ἱερεὺς

Palladius Dialog. de Vit. Chris. p. 128. H 4 an

an unreasonable demand of Justice made by *Eusebius* against *Antonine* in the Synod then Assembled, went out, and desired one of the *Bishops* then present to Officiate, declining the Communion at that instant, because he had *some Trouble upon his Spirit*.

If then we either are not come to years to understand it, or have no obliging opportunity for it, or some just hindrance that would excuse our joyning in the same; this Duty of the Holy Sacrament may lawfully be omitted. It is alike in it, as it is in our joyning in Prayers, or going to Church; it admits of the same Excuses, and obliges in the same Case. But where these rare Contingencies happen not, to exempt from it; it is a strict Duty, that is bound upon us, as we have seen, by a Bond of many Cords, and a peremptory Commandment. So that when we have an opportunity for it, and no just hindrance to put us by the same, to Communicate is a strict Precept, and in all Duty we are obliged so to do.

But against this expressness of the Command, and strictness of the Duty to Communicate; some, perhaps, may urge the words of *St. Paul*, *1 Cor. 11. Eo this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me; v. 25.* Which words, as often seem to limit the precept only to the Remembrance of Christ when we do Communicate, and to inti-

intimate, as if we had no Command to ~~do this~~; and so without Sin might omit it when we please, but only to remember him ~~when we do~~.

Now in Answer to this, I observe.

1st, That these words, *Do this, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me*, if we had no other proof for it, would not clearly amount to an obliging Command, and prove it a strict Duty to Communicate. For that which is plainly and indisputably expressed in them, is not that we should Communicate, but that we should Remember Christ when we do Communicate; and they might be used, and have their full Sense, if nothing more than this were intended by them.

BUT as of themselves they do not amount to such a Precept; so,

2ly, Neither do they infer the contrary, and prove against it. All that which they do express, is only that we must remember Christ when we do Communicate; and this is done, whether Communicating it self be a Duty, or whether it be no Duty; and suiting thus equally with any side, as it doth not prove it a Duty to receive the Sacrament, so neither doth it prove that there is no Duty in the same. And of this we have still a further Argument, because if these words, *as often, &c.* infer there is no Duty to Communicate, the same may be infer'd of Prayer, since in another Place they



they are spoken of it, as here they are of the Holy Sacrament. *When, i. e. as often as ye Pray,* says our Saviour, *say, Our Father which art in Heaven, &c. Luc. 11. 2.* So that if they prove that we are not bound to Communicate, but to remember Christ when we do it; they will prove also that we are not bound to pray, but only directed to use this Form in Prayer when we pray.

Thus are these words, *Do this, as often as ye drink it, &c.* neither an Argument that to Communicate is a Duty, nor an Argument against it. They are indifferent, and equally incline both ways; so that when that is the Question, of themselves they are no sufficient proof on any side, but other things must decide it.

And then, 3ly, Altho' this place do not prove it an expresse Duty to Communicate, yet there are other places enough, that do sufficiently evince it. For in this very Chapter, the words of our Lord at the eating of the Bread are absolute, and imply an expresse Command for it: *Do this,* says he, *i. e. Take and eat Bread as now ye do, in remembrance of me;* where not only the remembrance is joyn'd, but also this particular way of doing it, viz. by eating Bread, wherein he is to be remembered, 1 Cor. 11. 24. And so 'tis also in St. Luke, *Luc. 22. 19.* where the Words are

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*Peremptory* for the Apostles administering, and so answerably for the Peoples receiving it; without any intimation of the eating is self being indifferent and uncommanded; which that Evangelist would not have expressed so unwarily, if it had been our Saviour's design to leave them still at liberty therein. Besides that this Command to us with such further Marks and Circumstances, as shew that our Lord is particularly careful to be obeyed therein; and the very things themselves, which are signified by such Sacramental Eating, are all so many Obligations and Enforcements of the same, as I have already shewn.

When therefore in this place the Apostle says of the drinking of the Cup, *Do this, as often as ye drink it*, he doth not intimate that we may do it as seldom as we please, or as if it were under no Law, or express Precept. He uses the words, *as often*, not because 'tis an Arbitrary Act, and there is no Duty in it; but because though it be a Duty, yet we have not always opportunity for it, and so cannot always be performing it. For, as has been shewn, there is a Command to Communicate, and that, as all other Affirmative Laws, binds us to it at all times when we have a fit occasion offer'd for the same. When we eat and drink in the Sacrament, we must

must remember Christ; and when we have opportunity to eat and drink there, we are obliged to embrace it; as the *Jews*, we saw, were to eat of the *Passover* which answer'd to it, who were to be cut off from *Israel*, when at any time they omitted it. So that to Communicate, is no *Arbitrary Act*, but an *indispensable Duty*, and peremptory Command still.

And since it is thus necessary a Duty in every grown Christian to come to the Holy Sacrament; it must needs be a great and dangerous Sin in any of us, when we neglect and abstain from it. We must not think it an indifferent thing, but make Conscience of keeping off from the Holy Communion, as we do of keeping off from Prayers, or publick Assemblies, or making omissions at any other Duties. For it is expressly and strictly forbidden by God, as well as they, and we incur his Anger, and, till we repent and do so no more, cannot regain his Favour, when we are guilty of any of them.

A neglect of the Lord's Table therefore is a Sin, which, although God may excuse in those good Souls, who, because of their over-high Veneration for it, and Fear of their own Unworthiness to partake therein, in the honesty of their Hearts think they ought not to come to it: Yet will he not excuse it in them when they are better inform'd; and  
much

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much less in others, who neglect it because they are careless of it, or too Wicked and Impenitent to receive it.

He may excuse it, I say, in those Good Souls, who in the honesty of their Hearts, through Ignorance or Error, were held back, and because of their over-high Veneration for it, and fear of their Unworthiness to partake in it; thought they ought not to come to it. An innocent Ignorance, or mistake of an honest Mind, may plead our excuse before God in this, as well as it doth in other Duties. For in all of them, Christ has such a Sense of our Infirmitie, as that he can have Compassion on the Ignorant, and those that err, or are out of the way, Heb. 5. 2. So that if after an upright endeavour to be rightly inform'd therein; some good Minds shall happen to mistake, their Error will not be imputed to them. It may be through the loose Discourses of some, or the general Practice of the World, who, by being so seldom at it, seem to set lightly by it; they think themselves not obliged to it. Or again, thro' the extream Rigidness of the Discourses of others, who require such extraordinary things to a worthy Receiving as very few have attain'd unto; they think themselves always unworthy and unprepared for it, and that they should sin thereby, and eat their own Damnation. But if they fall into these mistakes.

mistakes which make them abstain from this Holy Feast, after an honest endeavour to be rightly inform'd about it; their Ignorance may plead their Excuse, and make their Neglect to be conniv'd at: God will not account it to them as a Sin, because they knew it not, but were mistaken. For in this, as well as in all other Cases, to him that knows to do good, and doth it not, to him 'tis Sin, Jam. 4. 17.

But tho' God may bear with this neglect of the Holy Sacrament in Good men, whilst they are thus innocently misled: Yet will he not excuse it in them, when they are better inform'd; and much less in others, who neglect it because they are careless of it, or too impatient to receive it.

He will not excuse it even in them, when they are better inform'd; or are in Place, and under opportunity of being so, if it is not their own Fault. Their only Plea for their not doing of this Duty, is, that after the best search they could make, they did not know they were bound to it, or that with safety they could perform it: and when once their Understanding is inlightned, or might be if they pleased; this Plea is removed, so that afterwards they can find no relief at all from it. They abstain then, when they know, or may know, unless they have a mind to be ignorant thereof; that if they

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they are truly Penitent, they might and ought to come; and that abstinence is wilful, and, unless they repent of it, and amend it, will end in their Condemnation. For to him that knoweth to do Good, and doth it not, to him 'tis Sin. Jam. 5. 17.

And much less will be excuse it in others, who are careless of it, and too Impenitent to receive it. If they are hindered from the Lord's Table out of Slothfulness, or are unworthy of it by reason of their Impenitence; those are not their Excuse, but their own Damning Sin, and they must expect to bear the punishment of it. To tell God I did not come to the Sacrament because I would not Repent, is to tell him I would not come and promise to be Good, because I was resolved to continue Wicked: and that is a very odd way of excusing it. Impenitence is no excuse, but a most Damning Sin; and therefore if we have no other Cause to give why we did not come, we must needs be liable to Condemnation.

If any of you therefore who shall peruse this Treatise, have refused God's invitation formerly, and have kept back from this Holy Feast: by what I here said, you may see your Offence, and how nearly you are concern'd, as you tender your dear Saviour's Honour, or the safety of your own most precious Souls, to amend it. You have offend-

offended God in *not coming to the Holy Communion*, as you would offend him in *not coming to Church*, in *not saying your Prayers*, in *not giving Thanks for Mercies*, in *not being humble, honest, and upright in your dealings*, or in *omitting any other Duties*. So that you must not think all is well with you when you keep away, as if you had done nothing. If the true Cause why you abstain'd, was your *well meant mistake* about it, and your *not knowing*, after all the search you had opportunity to make, that every Good man, who Repents of all his Sins, is worthy and fit to partake in it: God will wink at your *Ignorance* whilst it lasted; but that will be no excuse to you, after once you are *better inform'd*; for then now you will be guilty of a *Damning Offence*, if you still neglect it after you have been sufficiently told thereof. But if you have absented hitherto, out of a *careless Spirit*, which would not attend the times, or bear the pains to come to it; or because you have an *Impenitent Heart*, which will not promise that Amendment and New Life that is to be undertaken for and engaged to God therein: Then has your Absenting been your *Damning Sin*, which has provoked God against you, as all other Acts of Disobedience and Irreligion do. If this is your Case, you must look upon  
your

your selves all this while to have been in a great Fault, which God will not forgive till you seriously Repent of it and amend it. For God will forgive you this Sin of neglecting the Holy Sacrament, upon the same condition, whereon he will forgive you all others, namely, when you forsake it, and turn away from it, and, instead of absenting, learn to frequent the same. So that if you would keep a Good Conscience towards God, and die in Peace, and have no unrepented Sins to answer for at the last Judgment: Every one of you, that has sinfully slighted this Blessed Sacrament hitherto, must come to it henceforward, and, according to your Saviour Christ's Holy Commandment, readily partake in it, when you are called thereto.

## CHAP. II.

### Of the Benefits of Communicating.

#### The Contents.

The Sacrament is full of Blessings, which make it not only our Duty, but our Priviledge. In the General; it is the most effectual means in all Religion to recommend our Prayers, and make them powerful; and so is the likeliest way to attain all Mercies. In particular, 1. It



It Seals to us the Pardon of our Sins for the Peace of our Consciences. 2. It encreases and Confirms in us all Graces. Those are ordinarily such as we bring along with us. It confers Grace, 1. By the Natural Virtue and Tendency of those Duties, which it both exercises, and excites in us. 2. By those inward Assistances, which it conveys to us. Since on all these accounts it is so excellent a means of Grace and New Life, 'tis the best Rule any Person can observe, who would go on in the Work of Repentance. All these Motives to Communicate, both from Duty and Interest, summ'd up.

**H**AVING shewn in the former Chapter how much it is every Christians Duty to frequent the Holy Sacrament, who is of Age to come to it, and how greatly they sin against God who neglect it, both from the obliging Nature of the thing, and from Christ's express Commandment. I proceed now in this Chapter.

4ly, To shew what great inducements we have to it, and how great the Benefits are that come thereby, which should make us press to it of our selves, were it not Commanded.

The Holy Sacrament has Blessings enow within it self to recommend it to our choice, if God had not interposed his Authority, and laid that weight upon it which he has. It is fully stored with Benefits, which render it, not only a strict Duty but

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in high Privilege to come thereto, as the Christian Church has always thought, whose great Penalty lay in a Separation, or Exclusion from it. It is not only a matter of Honour to God, but also of highest Advantage to our selves; so that in all Reason we ought to seek it, and Heartily thank God that we may be admitted to it, out of a care of our own Happiness and pure Self-Interest.

Of these Benefits I have mentioned some already, such as its being a vouchsafement of highest Honour to us, and a Token of God's greatest Love for us, and a certain Pledge of Future Glories; of all which I have Discoursed in the last Chapter. But besides them, it is full of many other singular Blessings and present Graces, which I shall now treat of in this Chapter. And those, which I shall take notice of, are these,

1<sup>st</sup>, In the General, It is the most effectual means in all Religion, to recommend our Prayers, and make them Powerful with God; so that 'tis the likeliest way to obtain all Mercies.

2<sup>ly</sup>, In Particular.

1<sup>st</sup>, It Seals to us the Pardon of our Sins for the Peace of our Consciences.

2<sup>ly</sup>, It encreases, and confirms in us all our Graces.

3<sup>rd</sup>, In the General, It is the most effectual

*fectual means in all Religion, to recommend our Prayers, and make them Powerful with God, so that 'tis the likeliest way to obtain all Mercies. And this it doth, by being a Commemoration unto him of the Death of Christ, which is the only Argument that prevails with him to bestow them upon us.*

It is the common way of all men, when they sue for kindneses from others, and think they have not Interest enough themselves, to use such Intercessions, and suggest such things, as have most Power with them, and are likeliest to incline them to grant their Desires. And as it is thus in our Requests to men, so it is in our Prayers to God too. We set those Considerations before his eyes, and suggest those things to his Remembrance, which are fittest to move his Pity, and to make him favourable towards us. Thus the Holy men in the Old Testament, in their Prayers, are frequently putting God in mind of his <sup>u</sup> Covenant and Promise; and making mention of his Servant <sup>x</sup> David, or <sup>y</sup> Abraham, or Isaac, or Israel, for whom they knew he had an especial kindness; and with their Prayers they used to joyn Sacrifice, hoping to be the easier heard when

<sup>u</sup> Psal. 119. 49.

<sup>2</sup> Chron. 6. 42.

<sup>x</sup> Psal. 132. 1. 10.

<sup>y</sup> Deut. 9. 27. and

Exod. 32. 13.

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when they came with their Atonement in their Hands, and that the Life of the Beast being offer'd up in Commutation, and accepted instead of theirs, God would be the easier appeased, and more inclined to hear their Supplications. Upon which account, that their Prayers might have a Powerful Argument to recommend them going along with them, they were careful to offer them up at the *hour of Sacrifice*, as appears from the Prayer of *Ezra*, and of *David*, 2 Ezra 9. 5.  
a Psal. 141. 2.  
at the *Evening Sacrifice*.

Now that which Powerfully *intercedes* with God for us, and which was shadowed out by all the *Jewish Sacrifices*, is our *Saviour's Death*. For it was his *Blood* that merited so highly at Gods hands as to make him think of shewing Favour, and being kind to us. *It is the Blood of Propitiation*, Rom. 3. 25. that *makes peace between God and Men*, Col. 1. 23, and *speaks better things than the Blood of Abel*, calling for Life and Salvation, as that did for Destruction, Heb. 12. 24. And 'tis the *Representation of that Blood* now in *heavenly places*, that gives *Christ himself* such absolute power with God, and makes him sure to prevail whensoever he *intercedes* for us. For by it he entered into the *Holy Place* where the *Mercy seat or Propitiatory was*, Heb. 9. 3, 5, 12, 24. and  
where

where he ever loves to make intercession for us. Heb. 7. 25. So that the great Argument, which either *Christ our high Priest* now in *Heaven* offers for us, or which in our *Prayers* we can plead for our selves, is his own *Death and Sufferings*.

Now this is set before God in every *Prayer*, and in all acts of *Religion*, in all which we use *Christ's Name*, and desire to be heard and hope to prevail through his *Mediation*. But in the *Holy Sacrament*, it is done more perfectly, and with greater *Solemnity*, and that too by *Gods own appointment*. For one chief end of the *Holy Sacrament*, is to *Commemorate the Death of Christ*; i. e. to set it out in solemn shew, and make mention of it, not only before *Men*, but also to *Almighty God*. *This*

*do in Remembrance of*  
*his sacrifice.* <sup>b</sup> *Commemoration of*  
*me,* says our Saviour,

*Luc. 22. 19* And as oft as ye do it, says *St. Paul*, ye shew forth the *Lords Death*, i. e. both to *God* and *Man*, till he come. *1 Cor. 11. 26.*

Thus do we no where so livelily and advantageously set out this great Argument of being heard, as in the *Holy Sacrament*: which we may justly hope will be the more observed, and have the more effect, because it is not done of our own heads, but by *Gods own special Direction and Ap-*  
*point-*

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pointment, And where the Argument is most advantageously set out, we may expect the better effect, and greater force from it. And this the *Ancient Christians* thought, accounting their Prayers were not like to be so Powerful at any time, as when this Commemoration of Christ's Death, the only Plea for being heard, accompanied them. And therefore at the Holy Sacrament, they

<sup>b</sup> used to Pray, not only for themselves, but also for all others, and to recommend any Person or thing to God which was dear to them, thinking they could never so advantageously sue for them, as at that time.

<sup>b</sup> Thus is in the form prescribed Constit. Apostol. l. 8. c. 12. & 15. b. 484. 485. tom. prim. Concil. eccl. Lab. And this Eusebius testifies de vita Constant. l. 4. c. 45. See also Missam S. Basilii.

Thus in the General, is the Holy Sacrament a most likely means to obtain for us all Mercies, because it is the most effectual course in all Religion to recommend our Prayers, which must procure them for us.

2ly, In Particular.

1st, It seals to us the Pardon of our Sins, for the peace of our Consciences.

2ly, It increases and confirms in us all our Graces.

1st, It seals and confirms to us the Pardon of our Sins, for the peace of our Consciences.

In

In the Holy Sacrament, God calls us to give us a full Pardon, by giving us that Blood, which was <sup>d</sup> shed for the remission of Sins, d Mat. 26. 18 and which is the Blood of Expiation: and having received that at his hand, if we are true Penitents, we need not doubt but that our sins are expiated, and that he is reconciled to us. The Sacrament it self, as we have seen, is nothing less than a solemn Confirmation of the New Covenant, which promises Remission of Sin, to all that truly repent of it. So that when with Penitent Hearts we come to joyn in it, we come to stipulate and secure a Pardon of all our Offences, which will give us all the security thereof that Covenants and Promises can make us. Whensoever we Repent indeed, we have God's promise of Forgiveness, which may Comfort our hearts after any sin, not only in the Holy Communion, but in every Penitential Prayer and Confession. But in the Blessed Sacrament, this Promise is again repeated, and in most solemn manner Sealed and Confirmed; shew us that God is still of the same mind, and to give us a renewed and a sensible assurance of it. And when God has thus set his Seal to it, and a Penitent Soul has just received his Word and Bond for it; it need not question but that he is reconciled, and, unless it starts back

back from these penitential Engagements, and falls afresh into new Provocations, that he will always continue so to be.

And thus the Sacrament is the most effectual Means, to calm the Fears, and quiet the Consciences of all true Penitents. If once they make sure of their own Repentance after any Offences, it doth that in an ordinary way, which an *Angel from Heaven*, and a *special Revelation* would do in extraordinary, i. e. it lets them know that their Sins are Pardoned, and that God is their Friend. For therein they receive from him the *Blood of Expiation*, a plain proof that their Sins are aton'd for and forgiven. And therein there is an expresse Agreement, and solemn Covenant of Peace and Reconciliation between God and them, which is confirm'd by this Feast of his own prescribing: and having this Instrument of his own appointment, which they may look upon as his Hand and Seal to it, they may chearfully depend upon it, and rest satisfied in their own mind.

2ly, It increases and confirms in us all our Graces.

These Graces, are ordinarily such as we bring along with us, which we either have already practised, or are fully purposed and resolved to practise. For therein God gives Grace only to the *Worthy Communicants* and those Communicants only are *Worthy*,



who *Repent of all their Sins*, and are wholly determin'd to lead a New Life in Ob-  
dience to all his Holy Commandments. It is  
not a Sacrament intended to give strength  
in Grace, to those that have nothing of it;  
for it is our *Spiritual Meat and Bread*, as our  
Saviour calls it, *John 6. 51, 55.* the use  
whereof is not to give *Life to a Dead Per-  
son*, but *Strength and Nourishment to a Live-  
ing*. It is not designed to turn an Impeni-  
tent Man into a true Penitent, or to make  
an ill Man Good; for every impenitently  
ill Man, is an Unworthy Receiver, and  
eats his *own Damnation*, which is a *Curse*  
and not a *Blessing*; so that he is not the  
better, but the worse by it. But it is in-  
tended to make a *Good Man Better*, to car-  
ry on Repentance in those that have begun  
it, and to conform and enlarge every Vir-  
tue in those who are already possessed  
thereof. If we come to it with *Faith*, or  
*Belief of the Holy Scriptures*, particularly  
of God's promises to *pardon* our Sins for  
Christ's sake upon our *true Repentance*, and  
to *help us to any Graces* upon our honest en-  
deavours, and to make us *Eternally Happy*  
upon our *entire Obedience*; it *strengthens*  
and *assures that Faith*: if with *Love of our*  
*dear Lord*, who died for us; it *increases* it:  
if with *Thankfulness* for his Kindnesses,  
particularly for that of giving his own  
*Life for ours*; it makes us *more sensible*  
there-

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thereof: if with *hearty Repentance*, and full purpose of amending all our Sins; it makes us *unmoveable* and *settled* in the same: if with *Peace* and *Charity* towards all our *Neighbours*; it fills us with a *greater abundance* of them. It augments all the *Virtues* of a Good Man, which he brings to it, making him more perfect in them, and more strong in Spirit to persevere and go through with them: But these Effects it has not, upon an ill Man; nor produces this increase of *Virtue* in those, who bring nothing of it along with them. So that 'tis no disparagement to the *Virtue* of this Blessed Sacrament, if wicked Men find themselves wicked still, and not at all amended by their Receipt thereof, since it was not ordained for their Improvement. It was not meant to give *Grace* to those who are *Graceless*, or to give *Repentance* to *Impenitent* Persons: but to carry them thro' their Repentance, who have fully set upon it, and to enable them to lead a New Life, who are resolved already within themselves to do so, and to strengthen them to amend a Miscarriage, who are wholly bent to strive against the same, and to confer *Grace* on those that have it, and make them more Gracious still.

And this, the Holy Sacrament is to every worthy Communicant. It conveys *Grace* into his Soul, and makes him stand

more firm, and increase in every Virtue of a Christian. It is an excellent means to make him a better Man, and to carry him on to improve in Duty and Holy living: So that every one who comes worthily, will gain a great increase of Grace and Strength, and be much set on Spiritual growth by Receiving.

Now this it doth two ways,

1st, By the *Natural Virtue and Tendency of those Duties, which it exercises and excites in us.*

2ly, By those *inward Assistances, which it conveys to us.*

1st, A worthy Receiving conveys Grace into our Souls, and confirms and increases us in all Virtues, by the *Natural Efficacy and Tendency of those Duties, which it exercises and excites in us.* For it excites, and therein we exercise several Duties, which help on a good Life, and set it forward; and therein we bind our selves by solemn Vows and Engagements to go on in it: both which are most powerful to effect and improve it.

1st, *It excites, and therein we exercise several Duties, which help on a good Life, and set it forward.* All the Duties of worthy Receiving, are instances of an Holy Life, as we have seen, and parts of a good Man: but several of them are not only *particular Duties in themselves,* but with-  
all

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all most powerful helps to the performance of *all others*: So that in performing and improving them, we do not only discharge and grow in *some* Virtues; but make a way for our easie Discharge and fuller Growth in *all others* also. And these are, a *sixt Remembrance* and *firm Faith* of *Christ's wonderful Kindness* to us, especially in *Dying* for us; an *intense Love*, and *heartty Thankfulness*, and *intire Resignation* of our selves to his Service, and *true Repentance* and *Abhorrence* of all our Sins; all which, as they are much improved in a *worthy Communion*, so are they most *Powerful* in helping us to become *Obedient* and *Good men*.

1<sup>st</sup>, I say these Duties are improved in *by the Holy Communion*. And this they are by being both *exercised*, and *excited* in us at that time.

They are *all exercised* in every *Worthy Communicant* at that time, because in *them*, as we have seen, the *worthiness of Receiving* doth consist. And the more still they are exercised, the more they are improved. For all *Habits* come by Usage, and Custom makes those things, which at first seem strange, to become, not only *Easie*, but *Natural* to us. So that in exercising them at the *Sacrament*, we shall improve and add to them; and go away with a greater measure of them, than we brought with us when we came.

And this we shall more especially do, because therein they are not only *exercised*, but mightily *excited* in us also. The Holy Sacrament suggests such *Powerful Motives* to them, and presents us with such *obliging Reasons* for them, as we can have any where else; so that we cannot take a better way, than by coming to it, to improve them. For therein we most *solemnly* and *attently Remember*, how when our Sins had made us utter *Enemies of God*, and *Heirs of Destruction*, Christ laid down his own Life in our stead, and by that *Ransom* redeemed us from it. And this is not only the *highest*, but, in a manner, the *Sum Total* of all those *Inducements*, which can ingage us to these *Virtues*, or possess us with the same. For what can possibly raise so warm a Love to Christ in an *ingenuous Spirit*, that is sensible of what is done to it, as to see how infinitely he has Loved us, and, when we were his bitter *Enemies*, gave his own Life in exchange for ours? What can ever ingage us to so great *Thankfulness*, as to think that a Person so far above us, and who stood in no need of us; and who was not sought to by us, but was even then most highly *disobliged* and had received the greatest *Provocations* from us, should most *frankly* give his own Self to do us a *Kindness*? What can so powerfully move us to *resign up our selves* to any one,

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one, as to see, that he has bestowed himself upon us first, to buy us off from our implacable Enemies; and that for no Self-Interests or By-Ends of his own, but purely for our Eternal Happiness? What can work in us so hearty a Repentance, and provoke us into so utter an Indignation and Abhorrence of all our Sins, as to behold in our dear Lord's Agonies what they deserv'd, and how unmeasurably mischievous they proved, and what inexpressible Tortures they brought upon him, when he would put himself in our place, and undertake to answer for us? These things are most lively set out, and powerfully suggested to us in this Blessed Sacrament, one chief Business whereof, is solemnly to Commemorate and make mention of them. And they are the most effectual Means that can be afforded us, to raise in us a constant Mindfulness, and a zealous and intense Love of him who died for us, and an hearty Thankfulness for all his Kindnesses, and sincere Repentance and utter Abhorrence of all our Sins, and an intire Resignation of our selves to his Use and Service. And the Sacrament being thus richly furnished with the most perswasive Motives, and thus vividly suggesting to us the most Powerful Reasons for all these Virtues; it must needs be the best Course to improve them, and we can

not lay out our time upon them better, or to more effect, in any other way.

And as these Duties, are all improved by the Holy Communion; so are they themselves,

2ly, *Most powerful in helping of us to become Obedient and Good men.* If we were but perfect in these Virtues, and they had once got the Ascendant over us, and ruled in our Hearts; they would have an Universal influence on all others, and govern our whole Lives. For if, when we are tempted to any Sin, our *Minds*, being familiarized to it, would at that instant readily suggest to us that *Christ died* for it, and that it put him to all the pain and anguish he suffered; we should not *endure to come near it*. If we have any true *Love* and *Zeal* for him, we shall shew no manner of *Favour* or *Compliance* with it. If we are really *Thankful* for what he has done, for *his sake* we shall *withstand* it. If we are *resign'd* up to his use, we shall have *nothing to do with it*, because *he is utterly against it*. And if we *abhor* it, for the pains it put him to when he answer'd for it, and which it will at last put us to also if we continue in it, we shall *disdainfully reject* and *turn away* from it. If we *Believe* and remember always, as we have need, that *Christ died* for our Sins, and procured us Pardon for them upon our true Repentance, and Grace to get

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get quit of them upon our best Endeavours; that *Faith* will make us *Obedient*, and carry us on to amend them. If we truly *Love* Christ, that Love will make us do *something for him*, and cast to please and obey e Joh. 14. 15. him. If we are *Thankful* for what is done, we shall never despise him by any Sin, which, for all his *Benefits*, were to return the greatest *Injuries* again: If we are *resign'd* up to his use, we shall *Faithfully* serve him. If we are *heartily Penitent*, and *abhor* our Sins, we shall forsake them. If we have this lively *Faith* and *Remembrance* of Christs dying for us, and this intense *Love*, and hearty *Thankfulness*, and entire *Resignation* of our selves to his Service, and sincere *Repentance*, and utter abhorrence of all our Sins: If we have *these Virtues*, I say, and in these *prevailing measures*, they will carry us on to an *Holy Life*, and make us *Obedient* to all God's Holy Commandments. And therefore since this Holy Sacrament, when 'tis worthily received, doth so much improve these *Virtues* in us; it must needs help us on, and improve us in all others, and in the whole course of a good *Life* too.

Thus doth a worthy receiving, by its own *Natural tendency*, confirm and encrease us in all good Living, by our *exercising*, and by its *exciting* in us such Duties, as help it.



on and set it forward: And so doth it,  
2ly, By our *binding our selves* thereat, in  
*Solemn Vows and Engagements* to go on in it.

One chief end of our meeting at this Holy Feast, and a prime part of our Worthiness in partaking thereof, is to *confirm the New Covenant*, as we have seen, and to make God our Faithful promises, that from that day we will amend all our Sins, that so we may attain that Pardon and Happiness, which he comes to offer and assure to us upon our amendment and true Repentance. And these *solemn Vows and Promises*, are a fast hank upon us, to make us leave our Sins, and do all that he requires of us. For every Man ought, and thinks himself concerned, to be as good as his word, and to perform what he has promised; especially when 'tis to one, who is too *Wise* to be deluded, too *Just and Powerful* to suffer any abuses of him to pass *unrevenged*, which all Men, that understand any thing, believe of *Almighty God*. When we Promise and Vow to him, we know that he *cannot be deceived*, and that he *will not be mocked*; so that we must needs see it stands us instead, and is our highest concern, to perform with him. And therefore, since in the Sacrament we do in the most solemn manner Vow to amend our ways, and promise an Holy Life to *Almighty God*; in regard none that are *honest will*, and none who are *wise and seri-*

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ous dare be unmindful of such sacred and solemn Compacts, it must needs be an excellent way to bind it fast upon our Souls, and fix it in our minds, and so help very much to establish and imprint it in us.

And thus we see, how a worthy receiving conveys Grace, and confirms and encreases in us all Virtues, by the *Natural tendency* of those Duties, which it *exercises*, and *excites* in us. For it *powerfully excites*, and therein we *exercise several Duties*, which *help on a Good Life*, and *set it forward*, and *bind our selves by solemn Vows and Engagements to go on in it*, both which are most Powerful to improve any effect.

And as it thus confirms and encreases in us all Graces, by the *Natural Virtue and Tendency* of those Duties, which it *excites* in us: So does it,

2ly, By those *inward Assistances*, which it *ministers and conveys to us*.

This Sacrament doth not only confer Grace by its *Natural Tendency*, as other means; but moreover, by virtue of *Gods Promise and especial Bounty* to the Worthy Receivers of it, as it is an Instrument in his hands. He tells us, that he will do great things at the presence thereof, and be liberal in Spiritual Blessings to all those who duly partake in it: So that besides what they do from the Virtues themselves, which are exercised thereat, they may promise

mise themselves much Spiritual Grace and Strength from his Free Gift, and immediate concurrence with it: For in the Holy Sacrament, he offers them all that outward Grace, and Spiritual strength, which Christ's Death procured; and therefore, if they come to it worthily, so as their own unworthiness may be no bar against the same; that Offer will be sure to take effect, and they shall undoubtedly receive it. And this is plainly intimated to us, when our *Blessed Saviour* tells us of *his Flesh*, that it is *Bread*, the true Use and End

Psal. 104. 15.

whereof, is for <sup>e</sup> *support* and *nourishment*, Job.

6. 51. And when St. Paul declares, that the *Cup of Blessing* which we Bless, is the

*Communion*, or <sup>f</sup> *Com-*

*Koinwvia*.

municating to us the

*Blood of Christ*, i. e. those Benefits which his Blood procured for us: And, that the *Bread* which we break is the *Communion*, or Communicating to us the *Body of Christ*, i. e. those Graces which the offering of his

Body obtain'd for us,

Gal. 3. 13, 14. amongst <sup>g</sup> which are these *Spiritual Assistances*,

1 Cor. 10. 16. And when our Lord himself tells us, that the *Bread* he gives us, is *his Body*, and that the *Cup* he reaches out to us, is *his Blood*, Mat. 26. 26, 28. By which, though he mean not that they are his

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his Body and Blood in their *Natures*, yet the least he can mean is, that they are so in their *Effects*; so that when we receive them, we receive all the Blessings of his *Blood-shedding*, and all that Grace which his Death has purchased for all Men.

And thus the Church of Christ has still thought concerning it.

<sup>h</sup> In the Sacrament, says St. Ambrose, Thou receivest the similitude of the Body of Christ, i. e. the Bread and Wine which represent it; but, together with that, all the Grace and Virtue which the true and real Body obtained. <sup>i</sup> This Sacramental Food, says St. Cyprian, or whosoever was the Author of that Tract, is in outward appearance a bodily Substance; but by invisible Efficiency, it works all the Effects of a Divine Power and Presence. <sup>k</sup> They that partake of the Eucharist by Faith, says St. Clement, of Alexandria, are sanctified thereby both in Body and Soul. And, <sup>l</sup> We

<sup>h</sup> Ideo in similitudinem quidem accipis Sacramentum, sed veræ Naturæ gratiam, virtutem que consequeris. Ambros. de Sacram. l. 6. c. 1.

<sup>i</sup> Sed immortalitatis alimonia datur, a communibus cibis differens, Corporalis substantiæ retinens speciem, seu virtutis Divinæ invisibili efficientia probans adesse præsentiam. Cyp. de Cana. Dom. sub. init.

<sup>k</sup> Ευχαριστία κήληται ἥς διὰ τὰ πιστὴν μεταλαμβάνοντες, αἰγιαζονται καὶ σῶμα καὶ ψυχὴν. Clem. Alex. Padag. l. 2. c. 2. p. 151. Ed. Par.

<sup>l</sup> Ἄς τις ἰσθίσκει, εἴ

σῶμα γεννῆται  
 διὰ τὴν εὐχὴν, ἀ-  
 γιον π. καὶ ἀγιόν  
 καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ  
 διὰ τὴν αὐτὴν ἡγε-  
 μῆναι. Orig. Cent.  
 Cels. l. 8. p. Ed.  
 Cent. 399.

eat the Bread, says Or-  
 gen, which by Prayer is  
 made the Body of Christ,  
 Holy in it self, and  
 making those Holy who  
 feed on it with Resolutions  
 of New Life and Holy  
 Purpose.

And this is another way, whereby the  
 worthy Receiving the Holy Sacrament  
 Confirms and Augments in us all Spiritual  
 Graces; viz. *As it is an Instrument in Gods*  
*Hands, who, at the Presence, and in the*  
*Participation thereof, ministers and conveys*  
*them to us.*

And by this it appears, that the Holy  
 Sacrament confirms and increases us in all  
 Graces, both by the *Natural Virtue* and  
*Tendency* of these Duties, which it excites  
 and improves in us; and also by those in-  
 ward *Assistances* and *Spiritual Aids*, which  
 it ministers and conveys to us.

And thus we see how the Holy Sacra-  
 ment is full of Grace and a quickning Spi-  
 rit, and helps mightily to set us on in an  
 Holy Life, and in the work of Reforma-  
 tion and Amendment. And therefore  
 then, any Persons that turn *Penitents*, and  
 resolve to lead new Lives; one of the best  
 Rules that can be given them, is to fre-  
 quent it. For it will carry them forward  
 in their work, and, what by the Natural  
 Ten-

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Tendency of the Duties themselves which are exercised in it, what by the Assistances which are conveyed by it, increase their Strength, and give them Power to go through therewith. It will perfect them in Obedience, by *exercising* and *exciting*, and by both *improving* in them that *Faith*, *Love*, *Thankfulness*, *Resignation*, and *Repentance*, which are the most Genuine Principle, and effectual Cause thereof. It will bind it upon their Souls, and ingage them to it, by their *repeating* every time they come therein, their *solemn Vows* and *sacred Promises* to go on in it. And it will enable them to succeed in the same, by bringing down from God those *inward Helps* and *Spiritual Assistances*, which shall bear them through it. So that if any man begins to look towards God, and longs to go forward with the work of Reformation and Amendment: He ought in all Reason to seek out, and press in to be admitted to the Holy Sacrament, For it is one of the best Rules that can be prescribed in his Case, and serves his End above any thing: and therefore *he* must not in any wise shun it, but lay out for it above all Men living. A man who will not Repent, indeed, whilst he continues in that mind, must not come to it; for he would not receive Good, but Hurt thereby. But if he resolves to amend his ways, and  
seeks

seeks out for help, and would make use of any Means which would do him most Service in effecting the same; let him be constant at the Lord's Table, and frequently Communicate. It will quicken him when once he is in the way to become good, and amend his pace where he has need to be set forward, and strengthen him in those Parts where he is weak and most liable to be assailed, as St. Ignatius told the *Ephesians*, when he advised them

ἡ ΖΗΛΩΤΗΣΤΑ  
 ΠΥΝΟΤΕΡΟΝ ΟΥΤΕΡ-  
 ΧΕΙΤΑΙ ΕΙΣ ΕΥΧΑ-  
 ΡΙΣΤΙΑΝ ΘΕΩ ΧΙ ΕΙΣ  
 ΔΙΕΞΑΝ ΟΥ ΟΥΤΕΡ  
 ΚΥΝΕΙΣ ΕΠΙ ΤΩ ΑΥΤΟ  
 ΥΠΕΡΕΣ, ΚΑΘΑΙΡΕΝ  
 ΤΑΙ ΑΙ ΔΥΝΑΜΕΙΣ  
 ΤΩ ΖΑΤΑΝΑ. Ignit.  
 Epist. ad Ephes.  
 Ed Voss. p. 25.

to be frequent in this Holy Feast; saying, <sup>m</sup> Shew haste to assemble often in the Eucharist; for the oftner you meet thereat, the more your standing is secured, and the Power of Satan is destroyed. It will fortifie him in all Trials, where in he is like to be most endanger'd; enlivening

in him that Holy Zeal, and steady Purpose, and other Graces, which must bear him through the same: For which cause, it was used antiently, and upon a like occasion would be so still, as a Preparation for the greatest Tryals, and to fit Men to Die Martyrs for the Cause of Christ. Those,

<sup>n</sup> Quos excitamus & hortamur ad <sup>n</sup> says St. Cyprian and the other African Bi-

shops

shops, whom we would preserve safe and invulnerable against the fiercest Darts of the Adversaries, we arm first with the Lord's Supper, where-with they may be guarded as with a shield, and wherein they may be secured as in an impregnable Fortress. It is an excellent Means, of confirming every Grace, and affording Spiritual help and Strength to all that want it: and that is inducement enough, were there no Command of Almighty God for it, for every man, who desires to be intirely good and strong in Spirit, to resort thereto.

And thus at last it appears, what those Blessings are, which come by the Holy Sacrament, and which are sufficient to ingage all good Souls to press to it themselves, though it had no where been Com-manded.

In reality, all Christians who are of Age for it, and have an Opportunity, and are Call'd to joyn in it, and can shew no lawful Lett or Impediment, of *Providential Hindrances*, *Sickness*, or the like, which would

prælium, non inermes & nudos relinquamus, sed protectiona Sanguinis, & Corporis Christi muniamus: Et cum ad hoc fiat Eucharistia, ut possit accipientibus esse tutela, quos tutos esse contra adversarium volumus, munimento Domini-cæ Saturitatis ar-renas. *Cyp. & alii Episc. in Epist. Synod. Eccles. Afric. ad Eccles. Roman. Ep. 57. Ed. Oxon. 54. pamel.*



would excuse their Absence from *Prayers*, or other *Ordinances* of Jesus Christ; are bound in *Duty* to repair to the Holy Sacrament. Our Blessed Lord, as I have shew'd in the foregoing *Chapter*, has given his *Express Commands* therein. And the Nature of those Things which are meant thereby, and which in that Religious Feast we are call'd to employ our Minds upon, do most straitly oblige his true and faithful Followers to the same. And after once they have been sufficiently Instructed, how much it is their Duty to resort to it, and how true Repentance doth duly qualifie them for this Holy Table, and make them Worthy of it; is still thro' Carelessness, or Impenitence, they shall stay away from it, they sin against God thereby, and are Guilty of a Damning Neglect, which will not be forgiven them till they Repent of it and amend it. But if there were no Guilt in the Neglect, and to Communicate had not been thus required of them; yet would the Blessings of the Thing it self have ingaged all penitent Good Men, to press in to be admitted thereto: For it is the most effectual Course in all Religion to prevail with God, and to be heard in all their Prayers; it Seals to them Pardon of their Sins, for the Peace of their Consciences; and Confirms and Augments in them all their Graces; bringing down such help, as may  
make

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make them stand in all Tryals, and carrying them on, beyond any other Means that can be prescribed for that Purpose, in the course of Repentance and new Obedience. Which Benefits, to all that love the ease of their own Minds, and have any Care of their own immortal Souls, are Invitation more than enough, to engage their Presence at this Ordinance: and as for those, who have no Care what becomes thereof, they are neither to be won by *them*, nor by any others.

And thus, having shewn *what is the meaning of eating Bread and drinking Wine in the Blessed Sacrament, and wherein the Worthiness of doing it lies, and how much it is every Good Christian's Duty to frequent it, and what great Benefits there are that come by it, which make us press to it of our selves, had it not been Commanded by our Blessed Lord:* I shall proceed now,

gly, In the last Place, to consider those Excuses, and to take those Pleas, which are most usually made by any Persons against coming to the same; of which in the next Part.

# PART. III.

## CHAP. I.

### *Two Hindrances from Communicating.*

#### *The Contents.*

*One most General Hindrance, that keep Men from the Sacrament, is a Fear of their being Unworthy and Unfit to receive it. This is Answer'd by shewing, 1. The Partiality of it, because they are not so scrupulous about Neglecting, as about Unworthy Receiving the Holy Communion, though there be the same case to Scruple both. 2. That every true Penitent is worthy of it: Yea, he that has only fully purposed Amendment, though he has not had time to perform it. 3. Impenitence, which unfits them for it, is no Excuse for the Neglect thereof. 4. Impenitent men, who alone are unfit, they understand the danger of their State, cannot continue therein but will amend it, and then they may worthily Communicate.*

*2. A Second Hindrance is, because an Unworthy Receiver eats his own Damnation, 1 Cor. 11. 29. which makes not Receiving seem the safer side. By Damnation is meant,*

*1. A Damning Sin, which is deadly till we Repent of it; and such are both unworthy eat-*

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ing and sinful abstaining, so that they are equal as to that point. 2. Temporal Penalties, which were inflicted for their Intemperance at this Feast, and other Disorders peculiar to those times, and are not now usual in ours, so that the fear of them need not discourage us from it.

**S**INCE a worthy Receiving of the Holy Sacrament is a Duty which our Blessed Lord has so straitly enjoyn'd, and from which we may all hope to reap so great Benefits, as has been shewed; it may well be expected, that all who would do Service, either to their Saviour, or to themselves, should readily joyn therein whensoever an Opportunity is offer'd for the same. And so, 'tis like, all who pretend to serious Religion would, were it not that they have some Exceptions in their own minds against it, which till they are removed, make all Discourses of the Duty or Usefulness of this Holy Feast to fall without effect, and perswade them, that however necessary or adviseable it may be to others, yet it is not so to them, who have so just an hindrance to excuse or discourage them from being present at it.

To give this Duty as fast hold as I can therefore on the Consciences of all those, who shall peruse this Treatise; having already set forth the indispensable obligations which we have to it, I shall now proceed to  
remove

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remove those Hindrances, and to take off those Pleas, which are offer'd to excuse, and keep men back from complying with it. And as for them, the most weighty and considerable, which I have been able to learn, or have had opportunity to meet withal, are such as follow.

Men are most ordinarily hindred from the Blessed Sacrament, notwithstanding it is so much both their *Duty* and their *Interest* to frequent it, by one or other of these things.

1<sup>st</sup>, Because they think themselves unworthy of it, and unfit to receive it.

2<sup>ly</sup>, Because of the great danger of Unworthy Communicating, Damnation being said to be eaten therein; which seems to make abstaining the safer side.

3<sup>ly</sup>, Because therein they are to promise concerning every Sin which they find themselves guilty of, that they will no more commit it; and this Promise some dare not make, because they fear they shall not keep it.

4<sup>ly</sup>, Because of the great difficulty which they apprehend to be in worthy Receiving, and their want of time and leisure to prepare for it.

5<sup>ly</sup>, Because they see others, or have found themselves, to be no whit bettered or improved thereby; so that 'tis not worth their while to fit themselves for it.

6<sup>ly</sup>, Because they have not that Charity for all the World, which is to be professed in it.

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7ly, Because, though they be with others, yet others are not in Charity with them; and therefore they fear they want that Peace which is required thereto.

8ly, Because it is a Presumption in us to approach it, and therefore say some, an humble Man should abstain from it.

9ly, Because many Good People are seldom or never seen at it, and therefore they may be Good too, and have good Company, if they keep away from it.

10ly, Because others who are unworthy of it, are admitted to joyn in it.

11ly, and lastly, Because though they ought, and would come to the Holy Sacrament, yet they would not Kneel, which is the Posture appointed by the Church, wherein they are to receive it.

These are such things as do most ordinarily hinder Good People from partaking in this Holy Ordinance; but indeed they ought in no case to be their hindrance from doing their Saviour, and their own Souls this Service, as will more fully appear from treating all the Particulars.

1st, One Thing, that is the most general hindrance of all, and keeps back very many from the Blessed Sacrament, who otherwise are desirous enough to partake in the same is their thinking themselves unworthy of it, and unfit to receive it.

Now

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Now to silence this Plea, and to satisfie the minds, of those who make it, so as that there may be no more cause for it; I shall observe these four things.

1<sup>st</sup>, *They shew great Partiality in this Plea, because they are not so Scrupulous about Neglecting the Communion, as about the unworthily Receiving of it, though there be the same cause to scruple both.* They shew all their Niceness about doing what God bids them, but none about letting of it alone. They are afraid of offending in coming to the Holy Sacrament, but have no Fear of giving Offence in staying away from it: as if God had only forbid them to receive unworthily, but had no where forbid them to absent themselves, and not receive at all.

But this, as I have already shewn, is a very wrong Judgment, for Almighty God doth as straitly *injoyn a Worthy*, as he *forbids an Unworthy Communicating*. He has given us his Command for it, and that too with such Notes and Circumstances above-mentioned, as shew that he lays a particular weight upon it, and highly expects to be obeyed therein. So that if we would not bring Guilt upon our selves by sinning against him, we must make Conscience of *not coming* to the Sacrament, as well as of *irreverent Treating and Prophanation* of it when we come.

This

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This then is very *Partial* and *Unfair* dealing, to be scrupulous only about the *manner of Performing* this Duty, but to have no scruple at all about the *Omission* of it: as if, when God Commands us to *do a thing*, *not to do it at all*, were not as much a Fault as to *do it wrong*; and it were not equally transgressed when we *Neglect*, as when we *Prophane* it. And if all those, who are full of Fear about *Unworthy Receiving*, would be but as Fearful of *Sinful abstaining*; this equal Fear on both sides would make them diligent in seeking satisfaction, and in carrying on the Work of Preparation: so that they might neither offend by *coming*, nor by *staying away*, but worthily approach to the Lord's Table, and be heartily welcome to it when they do.

2. *Every Penitent, who is resolv'd to leave his Sins, and has begun the Change, is really worthy; so that the thoughts of unworthiness ought not to put him by it.*

He is a true Penitent, who considers of all Gods Laws, and is resolved by Gods Grace to keep them; and of all his own Sins, and is resolved by Gods Grace to leave them: and so, changing his former evil Course and Practice, becomes a New Man. And whosoever does this, he is a fit Person, and worthy to come to the Holy Communion. For all the particulars of Worthy Receiving, are Instances of Duty, as has been observ'd, and necessary



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parts of a Good Man; so that every man, who turns Penitent and becomes truly and acceptably Good, will be endowed with all of them. Nay, if any man were to learn them, there would be difficulty in any thing else, if *Repentance* would go down with him: So that any Person who Sincerely Repents, may do every thing else which God Requires him to shew forth in the same. The great things expected of us at this Feast, as has been said, are these; namely. That we give *Thanks for Christ's Death*, and resign our selves up to his *Service*, and Repent of all our *Sins*, and be in *Love and Charity with all Persons*, and have *Faith in Christ and his Merits*: And all these are easie, and create no great difficulty to a Penitent Person. For is it not an easie thing for him to thank *Christ*, who verily believes that he *died* for him? And cannot he readily resign himself up to his use, who has already given himself up to an *Holy Life*, which is all the use that he would make of him? And is not he in *Peace and Charity with all men*, who has Repented of all his *Sins*, and then surely of *Malice and Unpeaceableness* among them? And doth not he believe those things which his Saviour *Christ* has declared to him, viz. That he died for us to purchase *Terms of Grace*; and that now, for his sake, God will forgive us any *Sins*, when we truly Repent of them, and help us by  
his

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his Spirit to any Graces when we carefully endeavour after them, and give us Eternal Life in Heaven when we intirely obey him, but that otherwise, than upon these Terms, he will not give us any of them; which are those Declarations that he makes to us in the Holy Scriptures, and wherein he expects to be trusted and believed by us: Doth not every Penitent Man, I say, believe all this, who is at the Pains to live according to it, and Repents that he may be Pardoned, and endeavours that he may be assisted; and obeys that he may be graciously rewarded for it? All this Faith, which is required to the Communion, is necessary to Repentance, and is shewn therein; for we should not leave Intemperance, Fraud, Malice, or any other Sin that is strongly recommended to us, unless we believed God had forbid it, and would now for Christ's sake freely forgive, and eternally Reward those who Repent of it. And all this Thankfulness, and Resignation, and Peace, and Charity towards all Men, which are likewise required to the same, are not only easie after it, but are parts of it. For if we are unthankful for Christ's Benefits, or unresigned to his Use, or out of Charity with any Persons, we have not yet Repented of all our Sins, but, as to these at least, are still Impenitent. So that when once Repentance of all our Sins is, there is, or may be in us every

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thing

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thing else, which God requires at this Feast  
to fit us worthily to partake thereof.

Thus is every true *Penitent* fit to eat at  
the Table of his Lord, and to be a wor-  
thy Communicant. And therefore when  
any Persons do from their Hearts Repent  
them of all their Sins, and are fully pur-  
posed to lead new Lives thenceforwards;  
let them not be afraid to come to the Ho-  
ly Sacrament, for they are truly such as  
God accounts worthy of it. If they have  
not shaken hands with their Sins, indeed,  
but live still in them, and are ready to re-  
peat them on the next occasion, they will  
come unworthily whilst they are in that  
state, and will not be made the better, but  
the worse for it. But if they have broke loose  
from them, and have been acted by God's  
Fear, and led new Lives for some time;  
and are still putting out more endeavours,  
and praying for more Grace to do this  
yet more perfectly: They are the Persons  
whom God calls to this Feast, and may  
justly expect to receive an hearty Welcom  
at it. Nay, if their Return to God has  
been so late, as that they have not yet had  
time sufficient for *well-doing*, but only for  
*holy purposing* that they will do well as of-  
ten as they shall have occasion, Yet, if out  
of a *serious Conviction* of the detestableness  
of every *sinful Course*, they are fully re-  
solved to leave it; and after a *dne Consider-*

## Chap. I. *men from the Communion.* 191

ration of every part of their Duty, they are fully, and without all reserve resolved to practise it; I doubt not, but that this Will and Purpose, before the Time and Opportunities for Practice come, will render them welcom Guests, and worthy to Communicate. For whatever Rigors afterwards came in, not from the Nature of the Sacrament it self, or the Necessity of the thing, but only through the Discretionary Power of the Church, and the Rules of Discipline, thus I think 'tis plain it did in the the Apostles times. For the three thousand Souls, whom St. Peter Converted at one Sermon, did not stay till they had opportunities of performing; but were admitted that very Day, upon their inward Change and Resolution, to the Apostles Fellowship, and therein to the Holy Sacrament, which was a part of it. They that gladly received his Word, says St. Luke, were Baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand Souls. And all these continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers, Act. 2. 41, 42. And when the Apostles went about to Convert the World, they admitted Men presently to Baptism and the Christian Worship, upon their Profession of Faith in Christ and being Penitent, without staying to see them Practise what they had promised, as appears

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in the *Converts* now mentioned, and in the Story of the *Eunuch*:

• *Act. 8. 36,* And when they were admitted to the Christian

37, 38. Worship, they were admitted to the Communion too, because in the *Apostles Days*, as I

• *Par. I. C. 3.* have *shewn*, that was an ordinary part thereof, and always went along with it.

If any Persons then have already left their Sins, and do not *willingly* allow themselves in any of them; if they have been striving long against them, and are daily gaining ground, and making a more perfect conquest thereof: Nay, if they, who, since their return to God, have not had time to *perform* all this, are yet *fully* and *deliberately purposed*, and without all *Reserve*, resolved within themselves so to do: They are the Persons, whom God invites to this Feast; they are *worthy* to come to it, and will be sure to meet with a kind and hearty Entertainment there. *God* and *they* are fully agreed in their own Thoughts; and the Terms of Reconciliation betwixt them are consented to on *both* sides. For he proclaims *Mercy* upon *Repentance*, and they thankfully accept it; he offers to return into Favour with every Sinner that will amend his Faults, and they are glad of the joyful News, and fully resolve

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solve an end to theirs. And since they are both agreed upon the thing, what should hinder them from coming to the Holy Sacrament, which he has appointed for this very End, that therein they may give their exprefs Consent to this Agreement, and mutually make this Declaration.

Thus is every man, who has left his Sins, and begun to lead a new Life; or, who is fully purposed in his own Mind, and absolutely intends so to do; a welcom Guest at this Feast, and worthy to Communicate: So that no apprehensions of unworthiness ought to put him by it.

And as for those, who neither have left all their Sins, nor are determined in their own Hearts, and wholly bent to leave them; they are plainly *Impenitent*, and thereupon most unworthy to Communicate. But then,

3ly, *That Intemperance which unfits them for the Holy Sacrament, is no excuse at all for the Neglect of it.*

*Impenitence* will excuse a Man in no act, but is it self a very great Aggravation of the same. It is no *extenuating Plea*, but a *Damning Fault*; so that no man must ever hope to escape the easier after he has omitted any Duty, by giving it as the Reason for it. When God calls us to the Sacrament, to promise him that we will amend our Faults, and lead new Lives thencefor-

ward; if we return Answer, that we *come not* because we are *Impenitent*, that is as much as to say, we *come not* as he bids because we *will not*, which is certainly the worst Plea that ever was made for any Offence, and can never render his Case better, but much the worse that uses it.

As for those then, who keep away because they are *Impenitent*; they are left without all Plea, and have no excuse at all to make, for their not coming to the Holy Sacrament. The only thing that can stand them instead, either as to it, or as to any thing else, is their Repentance and Amendment; which they will not delay, if they consider in how great need they stand thereof. For,

4ly, *Impenitent Men, who are unworthy of the Holy Sacrament, if they understand the danger and misery of their State, can by no means continue therein, but must forthwith Repent and Amend, and then this Hindrance is gone, and they may worthily approach to it.*

*If they understand the danger and misery of their State, I say, they cannot continue in it. For so long as they remain Impenitent in any, or in any one known Sin, they are not only unfit to receive the Sacrament, as I have shewn, but also to say their Prayers, to give Thanks, to make Vows, or to have any thing to do with God in any other part*  
of

II. Chap. I. *men from the Communion.* 195  
of Religious Worship and Service. They are  
shut out from all Benefits of Religion;  
they have no Salvation by *Christ*, nor any  
Hopes of Heaven. If they happen to die  
suddenly whilst they are in this State, or  
are call'd away before the work of Reformation  
is finished, (as 'tis greatly to be  
fear'd they may, if they put it off for the  
*present*, and as in all likelihood they will  
if they delay it till their *Death-bed*, at  
which time 'tis a very rare thing for any  
Man to go thro' therewith) they will go  
to *Hell*, there to be tormented with the in-  
supportable Anguish of a wounded Con-  
science, and unsatisfied Apperites, and a ra-  
ging Fire, and with all the Terrors and Dis-  
consolation of *Darkness*, and the utmost ma-  
lice of *Devils* and *Damned Spirits*, and the  
highest Shame and Confusion of Face: All  
which they must undergo without any Eye  
to Pity, or Friend to Comfort them, or any  
one to Refresh them, or any Abatement or In-  
termission, for evermore. And this is a state  
of such Horror and Astonishment, as no  
man, who looks upon it, can abide in: It  
is a Condition of such extreme Danger,  
as no one in his Wits can willingly en-  
dure. So that if any of those, who are  
*Impenitent*, will but be at the pains to lay  
to Heart, and consider of the sadness of  
their State; they can by no means persist  
therein, but will run with haste to Re-



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pent, and instantly set about the Amendment of their ways, that so they may be delivered from it.

And as soon as ever they do so, this Hindrance is gone, and they are *worthy* to come to the Holy Communion. For that which *fits* us for it, is not an *high Pitch and Perfection in saving Virtues, or Ecstasieck Degrees and Transports in Devotion*, as I have (*Part 1. Chap. 4.*) *shewn*; but such *true Repentance* and change of Life, either in *Deed*, or at least in *Will and Purpose*, as makes us *acceptable and honest Christians*. So that whatever were before, whilst we continued impenitently wicked; we are meet Partakers of this Holy Feast, now we have Repented of all our wicked ways, and are fully resolved to become Obedient, and need not scrupulously draw back, but may come to it gladly when we are call'd, and expect a friendly Welcom from our Blessed Lord and Saviour, when we meet him there.

And thus I have consider'd this Great, and most common Plea, wherby so many are kept back from the Holy Sacrament, *viz. their thinking themselves unworthy of it, and unfit to receive it*; and shew plainly, that no ill Man can be excused, and that no good Man ought to be hindred thereby. And the Result of it is this. If any Person tells me he cannot come to this Holy Feast, because

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cause he is unworthy to joyn therein : I must tell him again, That he must not only be afraid of unworthy coming to it, but also of unworthy abstaining from it ; and that unless he is impenitent, and still unresolv'd to leave all his Sins, he is worthy to come to it ; and that if such Impenitence is the Cause of his not coming, it is no excuse for the same ; and that he must consider of the Danger and Misery of that State, and so Repent and get out of it ; and when once that is done he will be worthy, since every true Penitent is welcom thereto. If he is truly Penitent, he is worthy ; and if he has not Repented yet, he must instantly Repent, that he may be Worthy : And then let him not hold off from this Heavenly Banquet, but chearfully approach to it as often as he is invited.

ally, Others, who cannot positively say they are unworthy of it, are yet kept back from the Holy Sacrament, because of the great danger of unworthy Communicating, Damnation being said to be eaten therein, which seems to make abstaining from it the safer side. He that eats and drinks unworthily, says St. Paul, eats and drinks Damnation to himself, 1 Cor. 11. 29. Now in Answer to this, I shall observe, 1<sup>st</sup>, That by eating his own Damnation, the Apostle means not that he shall inevitably be Damnd for it ; but only that he commits a Damning Sin, which will prove deadly to him unless he Repent thereof : And this is true,

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true, not only of *unworthy Eating*, but also of *sinful Abstaining*, so that they are equal as to that Point.

He means not, I say, that he shall inevitably be *Damn'd* for it. And this is plain, because for Christ's sake, God has promised to forgive us all our Sins upon our true Repentance, and therefore this of *unworthy Receiving* among the rest. Nay, as for this their *unworthy Eating*, the *Apostle* tells the *Corinthians* in that very place, that when they are *Judged*, or *Condemned* for it; that Judgment, if it brings them to Repentance, is not to *Consign* them to, but to deliver them from *Eternal Torments*. When we are *Judged*, says he, or *Condemn'd* for this Offence, i. e. to be *sick and weak*, which God inflicted on them because of it; we are not in Anger punished, but in Mercy *Chast'ned of the Lord*, or train'd up to Repentance by present Sufferings, that we should not at the last Day be *Condemn'd with the World* to *Eternal*, 1 Cor. 11. 30, 31.

But only that he commits a \* *Damning Sin*, which will prove deadly to him, unless he repent of it.

He that eats this Bread, and drinks this Cup unworthily, says he, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord, i. e. unless his Repentance, that Gospel Remedy for all Sin, prevents it, he

\* So St. Chrysost. understands it. Vid. Chryf. in v. 32, 34.

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he shall be liable to be punished, not only for an Abuse in Meat and Drink, as if it were only Common Food; but for violating and prophaneing the Body and Blood of Christ, which he should have discern'd therein, 1 Cor. 11. 27, 29.

And this is true, not only of *unworthy Eating*, but also of *sinful Abstaining* from the Holy Sacrament. For *that* our Lord has expressly forbidden, as I have shewn, and that too in such sort as shews he lays a great weight upon it; so that we most highly offend him therein, and cannot expect to regain his Favour till we Repent and Amend the same; and therefore they are *both equal as to that Point*. We shall be condemned, without Amendment, for unworthy Eating, and so we shall too for sinful Abstaining. And therefore if the Fear of Damnation be of Force with us, it must keep us off from both them, and neither suffer us to *neglect* this Feast, nor to *prophane* it, but ingage us to come to it *worthily*, i. e. with Penitent Hearts, whensoever we are called thereto.

2<sup>d</sup>y; By *Damnation*, the Apostle means *Temporal Death and Punishments*, which God did then inflict on *unworthy Communicants*. And this was not for all *Unworthiness*, but particularly for their *Intemperance at this Feast*, and other Disorders which were peculiar to those Times, and are not usual now in

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*ours: So that the Fear of them, need not discourage us from it.*

By *Damnation*, I say, he means *Temporal Death and Punishments*, which God did then inflict on *unworthy Communicants*. This he plainly intimates, when he sets down *weakness, and sickness, and Death*, as the *Penalties*, whereto they were *Condemn'd* for their *unworthy usage*. *He that eats and drinks unworthily*, says he, *eats and drinks Damnation to himself*, whereof you have many sad examples now in *Corinth*, for *this very Cause* of *unworthy eating*, many now are *weak and sickly among you*, and many sleep, 1 Cor. II. 29, 30.

And this God inflicted, *not for all unworthiness*, but *particularly for some high and heinous Disorders* such as were not only their *open Schisms*, but their *gross Intemperance* that had crept in by occasion of their *Love-Feasts*, which was a *Prophanation* peculiar to *those times*, and is not now usual, or any where to be seen in *ours*.

They came to the Holy Sacrament in *open Schisms*, not eating all together when they met in the same house, but *Scandalously dividing into Factionous Clans*, and *separate Tables*. *When ye come together in the Church, and meet all in one place*, says the Apostle, *I hear there be*

*P Schisms or Divisions among you*, or that you

p ΖΧΙϩμϩα.

bandy

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bandy in Parties, and do not meet all as one Body, 1 Cor. 11. 18, 20.

They came to it also in a most *scandalous Excess* and *gross Intemperance*, which *Vice*, though so confessedly loathsome in all other places, had yet, by occasion of their *Love-Feasts*, crept into this most solemn part of the Christian Worship and Service.

St. Jude seems to charge the *Gnosticks*, those *Sensual* and *Luxurious* Persons, with some such Fault. *They are spots*, says he, *in your Feasts of Charity*, when they Feast with you, feeding themselves without Fear, i. e. so freely as shews they have no Fear of God, or of the Solemnity and Religion of the Feast, Jude, 12. And so doth St. Peter more plainly in his Description of the same men,

2 Pet. 2. 13. *They count it pleasure to riot in the day time*, says he, *Spots they are and Blemishes*, sporting them-

selves, or being <sup>a</sup> *Luxuri-*

*ous with their own* <sup>r</sup> *De-*

*ceivings*, as we read it;

but in some Manuscripts of greatest Authority, particularly the *Alexandrian*, with which the Translation

of the <sup>f</sup> *Vulgar Latin*, agrees, it is being *Luxuri-*

*ous in their* <sup>u</sup> *Feasts of Cha-*

*rity when they Feast with*

*you*, v. 13. And with a like

*excess* Socrates charges the

q *Ἐπεφύγες*

r *Ἐν ταῖς αὐταῖς*

f It reads *De-*  
*licijs affluentes*,  
*not fraudibus.*

u *Ἐν ταῖς αἰγῶνις*

*Egyptians* a good  
while



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when they came to it: But also turned this Pure and Holy *Treat* into a drunken Club, and a *Riotous Entertainment*. In your *Eating*, says he, every one as he comes sooner, takes before other his own *Supper*, and one, being poor, is hungry, thro' the smallness of his *Provisions*, and another, being Rich, is drunken thro' the excess of his, 1 Cor. 11. 21. 21. And upon this *Schismatical* and *intemperate eating*, he lays the danger of that *Judgment* or *Condemnation*, which God was wont in those days to inflict on them. If any man pretend hunger, says he, for this Greediness and Intemperance, let him eat at home, that so ye come not together at the Lord's *Supper*, as now ye do, to *Condemnation*, v. 34.

Now these scandalous *Irregularities*, but especially this *Intemperance* at the Lord's *Table*, for which God was so severe upon the *Corinthians*, is no Crime in the Communicants of our Days, when among all the Unworthy Receivers, none are so by reason of such excess; but it was peculiar to theirs, when together with the Holy Sacrament they always join'd their *Love-Fests*, which were liable to be abused to *Gluttony* and *Drunkenness*. And when they did Provoke God thereby, and, by these heinous *Prophanations*, which call more loudly for *Vengeance* than other common offences, were exposed in those Days to be thus miraculously struck with *Death and Diseases*; yet was there place still to prevent these *Temporal*, as well as the *Eternal* punishments for the same, by true *Repentance*.

If



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If they bethought themselves in *Time*, and judged or afflicted themselves for their wicked *Prophanation*; their hearty *Repentance* and *Humiliation*, might stop the *Destroying Angel*, from inflicting sudden *Death* upon them in this *World*, as well as *Eternal Damnation* in the *World* to come. If we would judge our selves, says *St. Paul*, to these *Offenders* and horrible *Prophaners* of this *Holy Feast*, we should not be thus judged, or immediately afflicted and punished of the *Lord*. 1 Cor.

II. 31.

As for this *Damnation* then, which the *Apostle* charges on *unworthy eating*, it either signifies a *Damning Sin*, and that is true of *wilful Abstaining* as well as of *unworthy Receiving*; or a *Temporal Punishment* miraculously inflicted for their *Drunkennes*, and *Intemperance*, wherewith at that time they polluted and prophaned this *Holy Feast*, which was a thing peculiar to those days, and is not now derived down to ours, so that we have no just cause to be deterred thereby.

Thus it is, if really we should come *unworthily* to the *Blessed Sacrament*, we only commit a *Damning Sin* thereby, as we should do by *wilful abstaining*, which will be forgiven us afterwards upon the same *Terms* whereon *God* forgives all our other *Sins*, i. e. our *Repenting* of it, and amending it. Yea, and if thereby we should have provoked *God* to visit us, not only with future and *Eternal Death*, but also with present *Diseases* and *Temporal Calamities*; such *Repentance*, when used *Seasonably* and *Sincerely*, will likewise put by, and thro' the merits of *Christ*

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Christ cover us from them too. But if, when we come to this Holy Table, we are truly *Penitent*, and have broke off from all our evil ways, intending fully to lead new Lives thenceforwards; then we may with comfort assure our selves, that we are *worthy* and welcome Guests, and are not concerned at all in this Damnation which is threatned to *unworthy* Communicants.

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C H A P. II.

*Of three other Hindrances from Receiving.*

The Contents.

A Third Hindrance is, because therein they are to promise concerning every sin, that they will no more commit it; which Promise some dare not make, because they fear they shall not keep it. If this be sufficient to hinder any man from the Communion, it ought also to hinder him from Prayers, and being Baptized a Christian. But it must not hinder men from any of them.

1. Let them Promise this Amendment, and keep it, and then the Doubt is answered. They ought to make it. And by Gods Grace they may perform it, if they have a mind to it. 2. If after some time they happen to break it in any Instance, they have the Benefit of Repentance afterwards. A Fourth Hindrance, is the

the great difficulty supposed to be in worthy Receiving, and want of time and leisure to prepare for it. This lies not more against the Holy Communion, than against an Holy Life and all Religion. But it must not put us by from any of them. For, 1. If it required all that Time and Pains which is supposed, that would be no excuse for any of us to neglect it. To true Penitents, the time and pains is not so great as is imagined. It requires more of ill men, but less of good who may prepare for it in a less Time. A strict and Particular examination of our whole Lives, is not necessary to be repeated every time we come to the Holy Communion. This is not required by Almighty God, nor was it believed or Practised by the first Communicants. Nor doth the Sacraments, being a Renewal of the Baptismal Covenant, and a Seal of Pardon, necessarily require the same. What the Necessity, and what the Expedience is, of these strict Scrutinies. If they are used to Self-examinations, Good People may prepare themselves for the Holy Sacrament upon a few minutes warning.

3. The poorest and most imployed have time sufficient, if they would use it to that end: And where they have fewer helps and less time, the less preparation is accepted of them. A Fifth Hindrance is, because they see others, or have found themselves to be no better by it; so that 'tis not worth while to fit themselves for it. If this has any Force, it is not to be restrained to the Holy Sacrament, but holds stronger against Prayers, and other parts of Worship. But it ought not to hinder any Persons. For

1. Where it is true, there is no excuse from it

2. *In all good mens case 'tis false, for they are really better by it; many by improving in their Goodness, and all by continuing in it, for which it is richly worth their pains to come thereto.* 3. *Where they are not bettered at all, or not so much as might be expected; that is purely through their own Fault, in not using the means of improving thereby: So let them amend that, and this Hindrance is removed.*

**A** *Third thing which keeps back several from the Holy Sacrament, though both in Duty to their Saviour, and in tenderness to their own Souls, they are most straitly bound to frequent the same, is because therein they are to promise concerning every sin which they find themselves guilty of, that they will no more commit it; and this Promise they dare not make, because they fear they shall not keep it.*

Now as for these Persons, I would desire them to consider, that if this be a sufficient hindrance to keep them from this Ordinance, it is equally so to keep them from their Prayers, nay, from their Very Baptism, and being enroll'd Christians.: For God will not hear their Prayers for the Pardon of any Sin, till they Repent of it, and resolve within themselves, and make him Faithful promises, that they will never more commit the same. Nor did he admit them to Baptism, to be listed Members of his Church, till they had Renounced the Devil and all his works, with all the sinful Lusts  
of

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*of the Flesh, and promised to keep his Holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of their Lives. If we stick at these Promises then, we must scruple saying our Prayers, and boggle at all Religion, and, if we were yet unbaptized, upon this account we should refuse our Baptism, since therein we did, and ought to make as large and express Promises of leaving all our sins, as we can, or are required to make in the Holy Communion.*

But to those, who are afraid of the Holy Sacrament upon this account, I have these two things to add.

1. *Promise this Amendment, and keep it, and then the Doubt is answered.*

2. *Though after some time they should forget themselves, and break it in some Instances, yet still they have the benefit of Repentance afterwards.*

1<sup>st</sup>, I would advice them to *promise this Amendment, and to keep it, and the Doubt is answered.* When the Objection against promising, is only the Danger of performing, when they both *can, and ought to perform it*; it is an objection that lies only against themselves, in a suspicion that they will be wanting to their own bounden Duty and Service: And that is better removed, by their own care faithfully to discharge it, than by any thing that I can say to it. They *ought to perform it, and if they will, by Gods Grace,*

*they*

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*they may do it;* and therefore let them be careful to do that, and this difficulty is at an end.

*They ought, I say, to perform this Amendment, which they promise to Almighty God,* to leave every sin which they have formerly committed. God will not forgive us any wilful offences, whilst we persist *In-penitent*, and continue to repeat them; but requires first, on *our* part, that we forsake and amend the same. *Sin no more*, says our Saviour to the *Woman taken in Adultery*, and then *will not I condemn thee*, Joh. 8. 4. 11. And, *Let the Wicked man forsake his ways*, says God by *Isaiah*, and return unto the Lord, and then *he will have mercy upon him, and abundantly pardon*, Isa. 5. 7. It is no indifferent matter that is left to our own choice, whether we will leave our sins, or no; but the thing must of necessity be done, if ever we hope to appease God, or to go to Heaven. So that we must not be less forward to promise, for that is our Duty, but more careful to perform.

And as they ought to perform this amendment,, which they promise to Almighty God, so by *his Grace* they may perform it, if they *will*, and have a mind to do so. When at this Feast, they say that they *will never commit this or that sin any more*, according as God has required, they say not that they will never be surprized into it,

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it, but that they will never act it wilfully, i. e. when they see it, and are aware thereof; or, if at any time they do fall into it again, that they will not *persist* therein, but *amend* it, *Repentance* always going along and being implied from the *beginning* to the end of the *Gospel Covenant*. And this by Gods *help* they all may do, if they make it their serious business, and lay out their utmost care and pains upon it. For when a mans *Conscience* tells him, that the thing is sinful which he is about to act, or at least he could readily see it, if he would direct his Eye thereto; he need not go on therewith unless he will, but if he please, may instantly turn away from it. This, I say, he may do; for if he will not be wanting to himself, God will not be wanting to him therein, but inable him effectually to abstain from the same when he truly endeavours so to do. If once we are careful to *work out our own Salvation*: St. Paul assures us that he *will work in us both to will and to do*, Phil. 2. 12, 13. To him that hath, i. e. imployes what he hath, our Saviour promises that *more shall be given*, Mat. 25. 29. And elsewhere again, *God will give the Holy Spirit to those that ask him*, Luc. 11. 13.

And since by Gods Grace they may perform this Amendment if they will, and ought to perform it, if ever they hope he should accept them; let them  
but

but be careful so to do, and then this Hindrance will give them no more trouble, but be quite removed. They will have no cause to be slow to promise, what they will be thus honestly careful to perform.

2. Though afterwards they should forget themselves, and break this promise in some instance; yet is not their case desperate thereupon, but they have still the benefit of Repentance for that breach of promise afterwards.

Indeed, if they break it as soon as ever they have made it, and run constant changes in sinning and repenting, performing this time, and transgressing it the next; that Repentance, I doubt, will be of no avail with God, because it rests only in fair Words and Promises, or, at best, in some faint attempts, without any real Reformation and Amendment. Nay, if they they fall a Second time into some sins, which lay waste the Conscience, such as Murder, Adultery, wilful Perjury, and the like, which few good men can ever incur at first, and which fewer can afterwards Repeat, when once they have smarted for the same: It may still give cause, why the sufficiency of their repentance should be questioned. But if in sins which are more ordinarily incurred, as Discontent, Pride, Revenge, Back-biting, Passion, &c. which are generally meant by those who



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are kept back by this Impediment ; If after they have promised to leave *these* sins, I say, they go on for some due time to make good their word, and avoid the offence in several opportunities which lead them to repeat the same ; but at last they happen to forget themselves, and break it in some instance : yet doth not that *null* their former Repentance, or make their case desperate thereupon ; but they have still the *benefit of Repentance afterwards*, for that breach both of duty and promise ; and, by amending what they have done amiss, may be perfectly restored and made whole again. For God will pardon us upon our true Repentance, not only *Once*, or a *Second* time, but as *often* as there is occasion. So that if after we have promised in the Holy Sacrament, that we will never more be guilty of any particular sin, we yet happen to yield to it at length, and are anew overcome : let us but truly Repent of that breach, and fully resolve against it a second time, and then we are made whole as we were in our former station.

As for this Hindrance then, whereby some are kept back from the Holy Sacrament, *viz.* Their *promising therein concerning every Sin that they will no more com-*

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mit it, which promise they dare not make, because they are afraid they shall not keep it: it need not stick with them, nor ought to hinder any man, who pretends to Religion. For let them promise *this Amendment*, and keep it, and then the doubt is answered. Or, if after they have kept it for some time, they happen to fail upon some occasion; let them Repent of that Breach, and make new Promises and faithful Resolutions, and then they are whole again. And all this has nothing in it that can be avoided, or ought to be feared, but is all necessary and desirable to be done: for it is their duty thus to promise, and their duty to perform, and their great Priviledge, that, if they fail in any instance afterwards, yet still upon repeating their Repentance they shall receive a Pardon. It is what every man must do, not only to be a worthy Communicant, but to be a Christian. For the same things are promised in Prayer, and in Holy Baptism: so that if any man draw back from them, and sticks to promise them: he must not pray to God, nor pretend to Religion, nor, were he to chuse again, would he be baptized into the Christian Profession.

4. A *Fourth* thing which keeps back several from the Holy Sacrament, is the *great difficulty* which they apprehend to be in a worthy receiving of it, and their want of time and leisure to prepare for it. They fancy it is a very hard thing, for any man to Communicate worthily; and since 'tis hard, it must needs require much time and application to prepare themselves for it: and as for their parts, they have little leisure from their *business*, and are not made to master difficulties; so that they must be content, and hope they shall be excused if they abstain from it.

This objection many are ready to make against coming to the Holy Communion. But every Christian will be much ashamed of it, and slow to urge it a second time, when once he considers that it lies not more against it, than against an *Holy Life*, and *all Religion*. For all the particulars of worthy Communicating, as I have shewn, are equally parts of indispensable duty, and a good man. God has required no more *Virtues* in us at the time of Receiving, than he requires of us at all other times, to render us acceptable Christians, to fit us to say our Prayers, or to give us any hopes of *Eternal Happiness*. So that if any man says, that the work of the Holy Sacrament

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ment is over-hard and therefore that he is not willing or wants time to fit himself for Receiving : he may as well say, that he is not willing, or wants time to be a Christian, or to go to Heaven, and upon that Plea may with equal Reason bid adieu to all Religion.

But to answer this more particularly; I must observe to them,

1. *That if the worthy Reception of the holy Sacrament did really require all this time and pains to prepare for it which is supposed, yet will that be no sufficient Reason or Excuse, for any of us to neglect it.* For when God bids us do a thing, can any man think it a good excuse to say, *I would do it, if it were not troublesome or long a doing?* Must we perform those things only at his Command, which are easie, and soon over; but neglect all others, which imploy more care and pains, and require to be attended longer? How we may like such Masters, I will not say, but I am sure God will entertain no such Servants, as will pick and chuse with his Commandments, and obey them no further than their own ease and occasions will suffer them. No, he expects we should do him service, tho' it be with difficulty and loss to our own selves. And this in all Reason he may very well require of us, because we our selves, who can plead no such deserts as he can, nor make any such Re-

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*compences* as he proposes, do all look for it from our Servants, in any business which they are to do for *us*. For if we set them to any work, we should think it a very odd answer, if they tell us that they would do it for us, but that they are unwilling to be at *so much pains* or to spare *so much time* as it requires.

Although a worthy Communicating then would require much time and pains to prepare for it, yet would not that be a just excuse for any person to neglect it. For since God Commands it, nay Commands it *urgently*, and lays a great weight upon it; we are bound in all duty to perform it, tho' it cost us both *time* and *pains* so to do.

But,

2. To all true Penitents it is not so difficult, nor requires *so much time* as is imagined; so that they have not so much as this Discom-  
agement to make them backward in it.

The Difficulty of worthy Receiving lies not in giving Christ Thanks, or believing the Holy Scripture and all its Promises, as I have shewn; but only in Repenting of all our Sins. And this, indeed, has more difficulty in it, and requires more time to ill men, who are held Captives by their sins; but not very much to good men, who are already set free, and have broke off from them.

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1. I say, *Repenting of all their Sins, and amendment of their Lives, has more difficulty in it, and requires more time to ill men.* For they have many Lusts to pare off, which are very dear to them; and many things to set straight, which cannot all be done upon the sudden. When they come to enter upon a good Life, who as yet are strangers to it; they must consider particularly of all God's Laws which are the Rule thereof, and examine their own hearts at every one, to see against which of them they have offended, and there make their particular purposes, and full resolutions of Amendment. They must spend time and pains upon this examination, to bring themselves to a penitent purpose, and a deliberate well-weighed Resolution: and when that is done, it will cost them more time and pains still in frequent Tryals, as in the course of Life and Business they meet with opportunities, to practice and perform what they have resolved upon. For, when upon a strict Review of their whole Lives, they find they have several sins to amend: they must not think, after they have resolved against them, to get perfectly quit of them on the sudden. But they must withstand the Temptations to them once and again, and pass through frequent Tryals,

and exercise themselves in many Conflicts, before they will have got the Conquest, and be indeed reformed from them.

Thus will it require both much time and pains for an ill man to become good, and not only to *Resolve* that he will amend all his evil ways, but to put in *practice* and *perform* it too.

'Tis true, indeed, I cannot say that the *actual amendment* of every Fault, and the *performance* as well as *purpose* of obeying in every Commandment, is necessary to a *worthy Communicant*. For a *full Resolution* of amendment, without staying for time and opportunities to fulfil the same, is sufficient to fit us for this Feast; as I have observed it did in the *Apostle's Days*, when, upon their first Conversion and becoming Penitent, before they had time to perform what they had promised, men were admitted to the Holy Sacrament, as they were to other parts of Worship. So that the Repentance requir'd of us to a worthy Communion, will not take up all that time, which is necessary to amend a whole Life, and to practice all the Duties of a Good man.

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But although it will not call for all that time, which is necessary to a *New Life and Practice* ; yet will it require all that time, which is necessary to beget and actuate a *new Heart and Purpose* ; and that will be much more in *ill men*, than it will be in *good*. For when *ill men* examine themselves, to find out all their sins, that they may resolve against them ; they have many *more sins* to Repent of, and to employ their minds upon ; and are more *Strangers* to their *own Hearts and Lives* , having never observed or looked into them, and so need the greater *Labour of Recollection* ; and have more *hardness of Heart* and *coldness of Spirit*, so that they do not so easily renounce them, nor can so *readily* and *fully* Resolve against them, when they have discover'd them, as good men can.

As for this Repentance of all their sins then, which consists not in an *actual amendment* of them, but in *full purposes and resolutions* never more to commit the same, which is sufficient to a worthy Communion : It has more *difficulty* in it, and requires more *time* than ordinary to *ill men, who are held Captives by them.*



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But,

2. *It doth not require very much to good men, who are set free and have broke off from them.*

The great thing which they have to do, is, to examine what their offences are, and to find out their own miscarriages; for if once they do *discover* them, they are so *habitually* set to amend every thing that is amiss, that they will quickly resolve against them. And this discovery they will make much *easier* and *sooner*, than ill men can. For their offences being fewer in Number, are sooner run over; and their Consciences being tender, and used to observe them, they do better remember them, and are the readier, when they are asked, to give in an Information of them, than the others are. Indeed, if they do not accustom themselves to *Self-Examinations*, they will find more to do, and need a longer time, when they come to them. But if they are much vers'd therein, especially if they take daily an account of the *day past every Evening*; having daily discovered and acknowledged all their offences, they will bear them still in mind, and have an habitual sense of them; and so be able at any time to tell what *acts* they are to promise and resolve.

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solve upon, at a few minutes warning; as we may well suppose they did in the first times, when they Communicated every day, and, under the pressing wants and distractions which they conflicted with, could not set apart whole hours for preparation.

And here under this Head, I think fit to take notice of their mistake, who think a *strict and solemn examination after every known sin, which they have at any time been guilty of, and a particular Confession and Repentance for the same, to be one necessary part of their Preparation every time they come to the Holy Communion.* Whereas indeed, the work and need of Self-Examination, which is to make them see their own ways, is not one and the same to all Persons, nor to the same Persons at all times; but ought in degree to be either more or less, according as they who use it are already more or less acquainted with themselves.

But as for this strict Review and Examination of our whole Lives before every Sacrament, where doth God require it? *St. Paul, 'tis true, bids men Examine themselves, and so eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup, 1. Cor. 11. 28.* But this rule doth only require, that

that this work of Self-examination be finished some time or other before we come to the Holy Table ; but it doth not prescribe how often. It doth not say, that he must examine himself again to day, who had done it with care yesterday ; or that he must renew the same strict search on every return of the Holy Sacrament, which he did at the first time of his Receiving it. And the Apostle speaks it here, to warn against their neglect, who eat and had never duly examined themselves, either about the mysterious Nature and Purposes of this Heavenly food, or about their own fitness to partake thereof : As those *Corinthians* had never done, who came to eat the Lord's Supper, as a common Meal, not at all *discerning the Lord's Body* there ; for which God punished them with *sickness* and sometimes with *death* it self, *verse 29.* to.

And as for the belief and practice of the *Primitive Communicants*, such particular Survey and Confession of all the Sins of their whole Lives, was not held for a part of mens necessary Preparation for the Holy Sacrament in their times. They made such searches and Enumerations of Sins for the Holy Communion.

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munion; as they did for their Prayers, in their Holy Assemblies; and whatever they might do at sometimes, yet it cannot be made appear, that at all times or even ordinarily, they did more. For the Communion was not separated from the ordinary service in those days, as God knows, it has been since thro' the indevotion of later Ages; but always made a part thereof, for all those to join in who came to joyn in the Churches Prayers. Yea, even the *Holy Apostles* themselves, so far as we can judge from that account which the Scripture gives us thereof, were not put upon any such strict search and particular examination of themselves to prepare for the same, when they received it at our Lords hands. Nor the *Jerusalem* Christians afterwards, when they received the same at theirs. For they receiving the Holy Communion, as *St. Luke Acts 2. 42.* says, *every day*; and being persons of indigent Fortunes, who for the most part had little leisure to retire from their daily labours; such solemn stated Examinations and tedious researches every day, would ill comport, as I noted before, with their circumstances.

In the Holy Sacrament, 'tis true, we are to renew the Baptifmal Covenant with Almighty God. And to renew this Covenant worthily, 'Tis requisite that we understand, both what the Covenant it felf is, and what our own performances or violations thereof have been. But this we may know fufficiently, without having recourse to fuch exact and particular Examinations every time we renew the fame. When by means of fuch carefull reviews we have once got this knowledge, it may ftick by us; and by ufe, we fhall come to be habitually acquainted, both with the Terms of Gods Holy Covenant, and with our own felves. And befides, good minds do not love to run long upon the fcore in their accounts of thefe matters, but are wont to keep up this knowledge, and to revive their acquaintance with thefe things, by taking new reviews thereof at convenient times; yea, they are daily imprinting the fame upon themfelves by their daily Recollections. So that when they are call'd to a Renewal of this Covenant in the Holy Communion, they need not always to make thefe exact inquiries, like Perfons who as yet are wholly ignorant and unacquainted with Gods Holy Covenant,

and

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and with themselves ; which were to make themselves very unprofitable Learners, who are ever learning these things, but never attain to any knowledge of them. But the fixt and habitual knowledge which they have of these matters, may serve them upon occasion, to renew it in this Holy Feast, as I have shewn it served the Holy Apostles and Primitive Christians ; and as it Ordinarily serves themselves to renew the same in their Prayers and Penitential Devotions.

The Holy Sacrament likewise, is to *Seal to us the Remission of our Sins.* And till we have particularly Repented of all our sins, especially of all willfull ones, we are not fit for the seals and Assurances of Gods Pardon of the same. But what follows upon this, is only that we inquire after them, and repent of them one time or other, before we come to the Holy Communion. But tho' this must be done once, it is not necessary that it be always a doing, And when Sinners have once thus repented and renounced their sins in the particulars ; they may come to God afterwards, either to seek his pardon, or to receive his Assurances thereof, in more general Confessions. And thus we daily come to seek his Pardon in our Lords Prayer, where we  
pray

pray in general that God would *forgive us our trespasses*: And in the form of *Confession* in the daily service of the Church, which rests in Generals, and Descends not to Particulars. And so we do likewise to receive his Assurances thereof, as in the Churches *Form of Absolution*, which in the daily service is pronounced upon a general Confession of our sins. And as the *Jews* did also in their Sacrifices of expiation, which sealed and assured remission of sins to them, as the Holy Sacrament doth to us; and wherein, though the Sin for which the Sacrifice was more especially offered, was mentioned by Name, yet as for all the rest of their sins, they were confessed to God in a general form.

Indeed, as for this solemn and strict Scrutiny, and particular Review and Examination of the several parts and important Passages of our Lives; when it is managed carefully and discreetly, it is of great use in the way of Piety. It is highly fitting and next to necessary in all grown Persons; at one time or other; both that they may fully and universally repent them of all their sins, (for a particular search must discover to them all those particular offences, which they need to bewail and

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Repent of:) and also when they do Repent, that they may know they do it, and have the comfort thereof: And this necessity, to the fulness, and likewise to the comforts of Repentance: is both the ground and measure of its necessity both to Prayer and Sacraments, and other Religious acts: it being so far only necessary in them all, as Repentance is, and as without it men cannot be either Compleat or Comfortable Penitents.

But when once this end has been duly served thereby, and it has been used at any time to perfect Repentance, as often as we have fallen into any sins which need to be particularly Repented of: there is an end, I think, of its necessity, and that which calls for it afterwards, at particular seasons or ordinances, as at Sacraments or on Humiliation days, is not strict duty and necessity, but usefullness and expedience.

And very usefull and expedient it is, for improvement both of the Holiness, and of the Peace and Comfort of Religious Spirits, where it can be had conveniently, and whilst neither their Lives are too much burthened with it, nor their Consciences are insnared by it. And as such a grand expedient of a Holy



ly Life, I think it very advisable for all *young Converts* to acquaint them thoroughly with all the particulars, both of Gods will, and of their own weakness; and that by this means, having a clear prospect of all before, they may not either be surprized or beat back, by any Emergencies or after Accidents. 'Tis also very advisable in all grown Christians at some *certain times*, which they will chuse for themselves, according as discretion animated by the Love of Godliness shall direct them, and which they will make more or less frequent in their returns, according to the degree of their zeal for Holiness, and of their leisure for these exercises, and according as they feel themselves more or less to stand in need thereof, or to receive benefit thereby. But it seems more particularly advisable and fitting on days of Fasting and Humiliation and at the Holy Communion. For what time more proper to examine into all the great passages and particulars of our Lives, than when we are going solemnly to treat with Almighty God about them, and to seek Reconciliation with him for all our evil deeds, which are past, and to ingage that they shall all be mended for the time to come.

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But then as for this advisableness thereof at the Holy Communion, that is not to be understood, but when, being aware of the Sacrament before, there is time to prepare for the same by such solemn Examination. And likewise when Sacraments succeed each other at so considerable a distance, as may make a need thereof; the knowledge of our selves which had been gain'd by former Examinations, being in part worn off thro' length of time, or much new matter being stor'd up for another review. But when Communions come so near together, that 'tis easie to remember what we had discover'd before, and little new matter has occur'd, but what may soon be inquir'd after; 'tis most adviseable, I think, for most persons, especially for those who complain of the burden of these particular Researches, to proceed on the stock of their former Examinations, however to do so several times; and to run over all again, would not yield benefit enough many times, to recompence the burden and trouble which it brings along with it.

I have thought fit to say thus much upon these strict and solemn Scrutinies and Examinations of our selves, especially before the Holy Sacrament. And

to shew both their necessity to true Repentance, and when that end is served, both their further expediency, and withal our own liberty, as occasion requires, in using or omitting thereof, or in examining our selves, sometimes by more exact and full, and at other times by more Compendious and Defective Catalogues of duties. And this, I hope, may be sufficient to cure and remove their mistake, who *Conceive such exact researches to be necessary before every Sacrament.* Which I have taken the more pains to rectifie, because it has much prevailed over some very good minds, and greatly incumbered them. And they have been unhappily mislead thereinto by some less wary and ungarded Expressions, which they sometimes meet withal in Books of Devotions. Which, whilst they do very profitably prescribe these strict Examinations, as they do other things, as wise Directions and Prudential Means and Helps of Piety: have not always been equally mindfull to let their Readers know, that they are no necessary Laws thereof. Which last is found by Experience to be no less needful for preventing their proving a snare to Conscience, than the other is profitable for the wise promotion and advancement of good Life.

And

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And thus, I think, it may appear, that the work of *Preparation for the Holy Communion*, is not so difficult to true Penitents, nor requiring so much time of them, as some have imagined. It may cost them some time, whilst they employ their thoughts, in actuating their *Love and Thankfulness*, and other *Graces*, before they come. But if they have but little leisure for it, this need not be long a doing. For most good minds are so *inclined and habituated* to these *Tempers*, that they can express them, and that too, answerable to the Degree of warmth which their *Complexion* allows of in other things, with *Fervor and Intention*, upon any warning. But the great Work, which may seem to have *length and trouble* in it, is *Repentance of all their Sins*; and this will not be either *long or troublesome* to them. For the only thing, that will give them trouble in it, is, the Work of *Self-Examination*, to find out what their sins have been; their *Hearts* being so good, that they can quickly resolve against them, when once they have discovered them; yea, indeed, being habitually set against all already. And this work of *Self-Examination*, they will not find tedious, having used to  
look

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look into their own ways, and thereby got to be pretty well acquainted with themselves. Indeed, If they have not been used to frequent Examinations, so as to have all their sins at hand before them ; it may hold them a longer time : but if they have examined often, especially if they have reviewed and acknowledged every Night their every Days Transgressions, they will be able to do it at a few minutes warning. So that if they should happen at any time to be surprized with a Communion, which it is not decent for any good Christian to flinch from, tho' all would desire a more solemn preparation where they have time for it, yet can they fit themselves for it in that strait, and know what sins to resolve against upon a few moments Recollection.

But besides that it would be no sufficient excuse to any person to neglect the Holy Sacrament, though it requir'd all that time and pains which is supposed ; and that to all true Penitents it is not so tedious, or difficult as some have imagined, so that they have not so much as this discouragement to make them backward in it : I proceed  
NOW,

3. To shew that *all*, even the poorest and most employed have time sufficient, *if* they will use it to that end; and that of those who have less leisure and opportunities, so as that they cannot fit themselves for the same in great Degrees, God expects the less preparation, and accepts it at their Hands.

All men, I say, even the poorest and most employed, have time sufficient to prepare themselves for the Holy Communion, if they would use it to that end.

That which makes them apprehend they have no time for it, is a persuasion, that all preparation must be carried on in the Closet, when they are sequestred from all wordly affairs, and have set themselves apart for Devotion, and Religious Meditations. And for doing this, they who are full of business, who must labour all the day long, till they have quite tired themselves, for maintenance, or whose time is not at their own disposal, but at the Will of others, complain that they have no leisure, or vacant time to spare.

But now, besides that no Persons must pretend they can find no time for set Devotions, and separate Thoughts, since the most employed of all can find it some times to throw away on Vanity and Diversions:

*versions* : This conceit, That all preparation ought to be carried on in the Closet, is a mistake; for, when any persons are so minded, it may go on whilst they are held at work, and engaged in the course of their employment. For the great business of Preparation, as has been shewn, lies in examining our own hearts, to find out what our sins have been, and in resolving particularly against them. And this a Man may carry on in any place, where he has liberty for Thought and Recollection. He may call to mind his own ways, as he is on a Journey, or busie at his work; for Thought is free at all times, and every man may consider and reflect whenever he has a mind to it. And so long as he can find time for this, he has time enough to prepare himself, let his Condition be as dependant, or his time as much taken up, as it will.

And as for those, who have less leisure and opportunities, so as that they cannot fit themselves for this Holy Feast in great Degrees, God expects the less preparation, I say, and accepts it at their hands.

Thus

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Thus much he expects of every Man, and that all *may*, and 'tis fit they *should* perform, *viz.* That (unless they are duly acquainted with themselves before, so as to know without much Examination what they have to resolve upon) they do examine themselves about those things which they know are sinful, and, wheresoever they find themselves Guilty, resolve stedfastly to do so no more, and humbly ask his Pardon; and that they have an affectionate thankful sense of Christ's Death, and of all that he has done for them. But as for the Degrees of these Duties, how high they shall be in their Detestation of every Sin, how ardent in their acts of Resignation, how Passionate in their Love and Thankful Affection; though he is well pleased with it where he finds it, yet he exacts not the utmost height, as I have  
† Part 1. Chap 4. † observed, in those who are fitter for it; nor looks for more in any, than that every man return according to the opportunities which he has given him. Some have Naturally much flame, and great vehemence in all their Passions, and much time in their own hands, and much help from good and *instructing* Books, or great quickness of Wit and parts, which can readily and advantageously represent to their own minds  
M the



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the *motives* to these Dispositions; and these Persons are able to imprint an *higher measure* of them, and affect their own Hearts more *deeply* with them, than others of cooler tempers, and less leisure and fewer helps, and slower understandings, can ever hope to do. But when men have less time and abilities for them, God expects the less perfection and Degrees of them. For in these Cases, his Rule is this: *Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more,* Luk. 12. 48.

And thus I have consider'd this *Fourth Hindrance*, and shewn that the difficulty of the thing, or the want of time, can be no just Reason or Excuse to keep any man from Receiving. And the sum of what I have suggested in this business, is this: If it required all that time and pains which is supposed, that is no sufficient ground for any person to neglect it; because when God commands us to do a thing, as he has done most strictly in this Case, we must be willing to spend both time and pains upon it. But in reality, it is neither so painful nor tedious to good men, as is ordinarily imagined. It costs more, indeed, to ill men, because they have more sins to examine after, and more backwardness to resolve

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*olve* against them; but this expence of time and pains they must not impute to the *Communion* but to an *Holy Life* and *Regeneration*, which, whether they communicate or no, if they Love their own Souls they must labour and manfully endeavour in. But as for *Good men*, their great work is *Self-Examination*, it being an easie thing for them to resolve against any sins when once they see them; and this will not be long, or tedious to them: nay, if they have been used to examine often, and to call themselves to an account every evening, if necessity so requires, it may be dispatch'd at a few minutes warning. It is a thing which all men, even the poor and most employed may find time for, yea, when there is need thereof, without hindring or neglecting any other affair, if they are careful to use it to that end; and when they have less leisure and abilities, so as that they cannot fit themselves in great Degrees, there God expects the less preparation, and accepts it at their hands. To Communicate, is a most necessary Duty, which will not be excused; and a most equitable and easie one, which need not to be declin'd; so that no pretence of hardship, or of want of time, ought ever to be urged, or can ever be allowed to put us by it.

5. A *Fifth* thing, which hinders several from the Holy Sacrament, and makes them carelessly to neglect it, is, because they see others, or have found themselves to be no whit bettered or improv'd thereby; so that 'tis not worth their while to fit themselves for it.

This is a plea, which some, who are pretty constant in other Ordinances, are wont to make for their great neglect of this. But if there be any weight in it, they are much to blame in restraining it to the Sacrament, since it would hold much stronger for their not coming to Prayers, or the publick Assemblies, or other parts of Worship. For these same Persons that make this Complaint, of being little better'd or improv'd by it; could say the same of them too if they had a mind. For they are much more frequent in reading the Scriptures, in saying their Prayers, in hearing Sermons, and in joyning in all other parts of Worship at the Publick Assemblies, than they are at this Ordinance; so that if they are no ways better'd under the means of Grace, that unfruitfulness ought least of all to be charged upon the Sacrament, for alas! it is but very seldom they are seen at it, but much more upon praying to God, and hearing the Word, and other parts of Worship.

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And therefore if unfruitfulness under any Ordinance be a Reason, not of using greater care therein, that they may get profit by it, but of a negligent abstaining from it; they are to blame in confining it to the Communion, since it would serve much more to excuse them from *Prayers*, and *Sermons*, and all other parts of *Worship* and *Devotions*.

But that none may be hindered by this Pretence from coming to this Holy Last. I shall lay before them these things following.

1. *Where 'tis true that they are no better by the Holy Sacrament, that is no excuse for their neglect of it.* And this is plain, because we are bound to Communicate not only in Interest, so as that whensoever that ceases, we might be free to do otherwise; but in Duty too, our Lord having most expressly injoin'd and required it of us. Had we nothing but our own benefit to engage us to it, then indeed, it would be a good reason not to trouble our selves with it, when we found we were no better by it. But God has made it our Duty to come, as we have seen, by an express and indispensable Commandment: And when there is God's Law and Precept in the Case, it is an ill excuse for any man who neglects the Sa-

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crament, to say I did so, because he could not hope to be a gainer by it. If we refuse to do what he bids us, when it brings in no Advantage to our selves, we cast off his Service, and begin to be acted by other Principles; we do as good as tell him, that we will do all things out of *Self*, and with an eye to our own *profit* out nothing for his Pleasure, and in *obedience* to his Holy Commandment; which is as much as to say, we will only serve our selves, but not serve him at all.

2. *In all Good mens case 'tis false, for they are really made better by the Holy Sacrament.*

They are not better, perhaps, in what they expect, because their expectations are not right, but they look for such benefits from the Sacrament, as God never intended them thereby; nay, such, it may be, as in this World he never means to convey to them, either by it, or by any other Instrument. And thus it is, when men hope, after they have Communicated, to be fill'd with sensible joys and transports, to be absolutely assured of Gods special Love and Kindness, to be freed thenceforward from all further Fears and Doubtings, to have a removal of some troublesome temptations, to get quit of evil Thoughts and Desires,

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*fires, and the very first motions to ill things, of all dulness, and distraction in their Devotions, of all sinful surprizes and involuntary escapes, and such like. These are benefits, which, although God out of his abundant Grace and Indulgence may sometime allow to us, yet he has no where promised us, nor sees always fit for us ; nay, some of them in this Estate, do not agree to us, being Exemptions from such infirmities as are inseperable from our Natures : and therefore, when we come to the Sacrament, they are not to be expected from the same. They are not of the number of those blessings which are inseparably made over to it, or of those effects which are always wrought by it ; so that we have no Reason to complain of its being a barren, and unfruitful Ordinance, because they are with-held from us.*

But although they are not benefited in *these* Respects, yet are they in *others*, which make it richly worth their while to fit themselves for this Feast, and are an abundant Recompence for all the pains it costs them. For, besides the *quieting of their Consciences*, though not with an *absolute Assurance*, (a pitch of hope that is very rarely found in any, even of the best Persons) yet with a very comfortable sense of God's Love and Friendship ;

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which is an effect it will have in those good minds, who consider that therein they confirm'd the New Covenant with God, wherein he promised them pardon if they would Repent, and they profess'd to do it: Besides this effect, I say, of *quieting their Consequences*, it benefits them further in their *Graces* and *Virtuous indowments*. For, though some of them fear they are not, yet in reality all Good men are made better by the Holy Sacrament, some by improving, and all by continuing in their Goodness, which they ought to ascribe thereto.

1. Some Good men, I say, (and those, I hope, the greatest part) are better'd in the Holy Sacrament, by an Improvement of those Graces which they bring along with them: They thank Christ more freely, and Love him more affectionately, and are resign'd to him more intirely, and watch against those Temptations which were wont to win most upon them more carefully after every Receiving, than they did before. It spurs them on, where their pace was slackned; and makes them more mindfull of any Duty, when they had forgot it; and brings them back to it, when they had strayed from the same; and makes them Circumspect to discharge it, when they had been more remiss and careless thereof. It helps

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helps *Husbands*, to be more *tender* and *affectionate*; *Wives*, to be more *dutiful* and *observant*; *Children*, to be more *respectful*, *towardly*, and *obedient*; *Servants*, to be more *Faithful*, and *Diligent*; and *all men* to be more concerned to *Honour God*, to be more *Humble* and *Temperate*, *True* and *Faithful*, *Just* and *Charitable*, *Meek* and *Peaceable*, than they were before they partook of it. All these *Virtuous Tempers* and *Dispositions*, as there is need of them, and they can *attend* and *apply their minds* to them, are quickned and set on thereby. And tho' this *Holy Flame*, which was kindled in their minds at the *Altar*, will burn dim, and grow cool again; and this *Religious bent of Heart* will slacken and be more remiss in time: Yet being afresh enlivened and intended by a new approach to this *Holy Feast*, the former *Ar-dors* will be revived, and the same bent established, and so they will be always advancing forward in a continual improvement.

This increase of their *Graces*, and *Augmentation* of all *virtuous Dispositions*, especially of those wherein they are most defective, the *Sacrament* works in many good *Persons*, and 'tis very fit it should do it in *all*. And although I dare



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not say they are *unworthy* of it, or *unbetter'd* and *unfruitful* under the same; yet I will say they are very much *wanting to their own Souls*, who are not careful to carry on, and attain this improvement thereby. And if they examine their own growth in Grace and Goodness, by a growth in these points; I believe the greatest part of careful and devout Receivers will find that they are really made more perfect, and improved in Virtue by frequenting the Holy Sacrament.

Yea, I add further, they may be thus improved thereby, tho' upon *Examination* they themselves should not be able to point out Determinately in *what*, or make a *clear Discovery* thereof. For very few Persons do so strictly *observe the Degrees* of their own Attainments in any Virtues, with what *ease* they do them, and how seldom they sin against them, as may enable them to compare exactly the pitch of their *present* Graces, with the pitch of the *same* Graces sometimes *afterwards*. And if they should very narrowly observe them, yet would they not be able nicely to judge of every *small increase*. For little things are no more discernable in *Grace*, than they are in *Nature*, nor can be easier seen in *growing Virtues*, than in a *growing Man, or Tree*, or other *Natural* Improvements.

ments. And besides, since the Grace which the Sacrament is to improve in us, is so *diffused*, and extends to so many instances; when really we have gain'd and advanced *therein*, yet may it be hard for us to recollect, and shew determinately in *what*, and specify it in the *Particulars*. It is so I am sure in *knowledge*, which is another thing wherein the instances are so *infinitely numerous*. For altho' it be very plain, that the longer any man lives, the more *ordinarily* he understands and improves in Knowledge, yet if most of us were asked how much we are wiser *now* than we were a *Month* or *two Months* since, it might often puzzle us to answer it, and, though it be plain we are *improved*, to *particularize in what*, as well as it is to *particularize our improvements by the Holy Sacrament*. So that not only those good men, whose growth is apparent; but also several others, who have not particularly discovered the same, are bettered in Communicating, by an *improvement of those Graces which they brought along with them thereto*.

But if any Good men are not better'd in the Blessed Sacrament, by *improving*, yet are they all,

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2. By continuing in their Goodness, which they must ascribe to it, and for which it is most richly worth their pains to frequent it.

It is one great Grace and Benefit to all Good men, that they can maintain their present station in Goodness, and not Relapse, and fall back again into their former sins. Their *Natural Lusts* are only kept under, not quite extinguish'd in them, and will grow bold, and strive for Mastery upon any fair occasion. And they are daily in the way of manifold *Temptations*, which awaken them, and give more strength and advantage to them. And they are many times either wearied out with watchings, or lull'd asleep in secure carelessness, which makes them lyable to become a prey to them. They are closely beset with powerful Enemies, and much indanger'd by continual Temptations, and oft-times unguarded and fit to make but a very weak Defence; which are things that would hinder them from standing where they are, as well as from improving and going farther. So that it is a very great benefit, and they are much the better by it, if any thing can help them to keep what Grace they have got already, as well as inable them to gain more. This continuance in Goodness,

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ness, is less, indeed, than *Improvement*; but yet it is a most valuable thing, and of so great account, that, were there nothing more to be had thereby, for its sake alone it were most richly worth any man's while to come to the Holy Sacrament.

And this Benefit, which all Good men hold, since they would cease to be good, should they fall from it, all *worthy Receivers* ought to ascribe as much to the *Communion*, as to any other thing. They owe it not to it alone, indeed, but to other means also, *viz.* to *hearing* and *reading the Word*, and *meditating* upon it, which puts them in mind of their Duty, and of the great motives thereto; to *Self-examination*, which shews them their Falls and Deviations from it; to *solemn Vows* and *Promises*, which bind them to be careful therein; and to *servent faithful Prayers*, which bring down God's Grace and Spirit that inables them to perform it. All these, and others, are great means of securing their standing in an Holy Course, amidst all their Temptations to depart from the same; and therefore to every one of them they must in part ascribe it. But the Sacrament contributes to it as much, at least, if not more than any thing besides; so that in accounting  
whence

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whence they receive this great benefit, it ought not in any wise to be excluded. For therein they *remember* and *fix in mind* the death of Christ, which is the highest motive to this continuance in Goodness, and exercise that *Faith*, and *Love*, and *Thankfulness*, and *Resignation*, and *Repentance*, which are the best means to set it forward; and make God *solemn Vows* and *Promises*, which are the strictest bond to ingage and fasten it upon themselves; and put up many  *fervent Prayers*, which are the best course for the security and maintenance thereof; and receive those *inward Graces* and *Assistances*, as I have shewn, which *enable* them to stand fast therein. So that when worthy Communicants continue after the Holy Sacrament, to hold their present pitch of Goodness, and do not slide back again into their former sins; they must not say they are no better by it, for this benefit of *standing in a good state*, they do receive from thence. Though it doth not improve and bring them *forward*, yet it helps mightily to continue and keep them where they are.

Thus

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Thus are all good People really bettered by the Blessed Sacrament. For besides the *Peace of Conscience*, which is thereby much settled in those Penitents, who understand and consider, that therein they have sealed the Covenant of Pardon with Almighty God : Besides this effect, I say, in those who rightly understand it ; the *Graces of some are much improved*, and the *standing of all is greatly maintain'd thereby*, which last, were there no other expectation from it, is a most valuable benefit, and such, wherefore it is highly worth any mans labour to frequent it.

3. *Where they are not bettered at all by the Holy Sacrament, or not so much as might be expected, that is purely through their own Fault, and they must amend it.*

*Where they are not bettered at all by the Holy Sacrament, I say, or not so much as might be expected, that is purely through their own Fault. If they examine their own hearts about it, they will find, that they have been wanting in those things, which should have made it a lively means and help to their improvement. It may be, after they have felt in their own Souls that they have renounced all evil ways, which might fit them for this Holy Feast, they do not yet perceive any affecting*  
*peace.*

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peace of mind, and comfortable sence of the Love of God to be thereby wrought in them. But then that is, because they do not *consider*, how therein they confirmed a *League of Love*, and received assurance of his Favour to the Penitent. Perhaps they are not *improved* in an *Holy Life*, nor prevail more against their Sins, after Receiving; but then that is, because they themselves are *wanting* in those things, which are necessary to such Improvement. They did not *enquire* what their particular sins were, and *deliberately* resolve against them, before they came to the Holy Table; nor are careful to *bear in mind* what they have promised, and to *watch* the opportunities of performing it, after they have been there. Had these things been done, and this care been shewn, both before and after the Communion; they may be assured, as I have shewn both from the *virtue of God's Promise*, and from the *Nature of the thing*, that they would have been the better by it. But when these means are not used, but omitted, they cannot expect it should have its due effect in making them obedient, which otherwise it would have had. For the Sacrament helps us to grow in Grace and Goodness, as a *moral means*, which works on-

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ly in concurrence with our own care, but not without it. It makes us leave our sins, by engaging us to examine after them, and particularly to resolve against them, and to strive as the opportunities come for repeating the same, to get quit of them; and by bringing down such gracious *Assistances* to us, as will serve our turn when we carefully endeavour therewith. But if we will be wanting to our selves in these *Self-Examinations*, and particular *Resolutions*, and *after-care*, and good *endeavours*; then can it do us no good because we will not suffer it: and therefore, as we were before, so we shall continue the same unreformed, and unimproved Persons still.

Thus is the want of being better'd by the Blessed Sacrament, either at all, or so much as might be expected, altogether our own Fault. Namely, because we come not to it with that particular sight and consideration of all our sins, and resolution against them, nor are afterwards so mindful of our Resolutions, nor shew that care in performing what we have resolv'd, which we ought, and which are all necessary to our amendment: nor have that consideration, of its being a sealing of the Covenant of Peace and Reconciliation, which is as necessary to our reaping any  
Comfort



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*Comfort and Peace of mind from it.* So that whensoever we fail of that benefit which should accrue thereby: it is purely through our own Neglect, and we must thank our selves for it.

And since this want of being better'd, is wholly our *own Fault*, let all those who are kept back thereby, take care to *amend* that, and then this objection is answer'd. When they receive no benefit from the Holy Sacrament, they themselves are to be blamed for omitting those things, which are necessary to make it benefit them; and if they will take care to use them the next time, they will feel more benefit and comfort therein. So that this hindrance lasts no longer than they are pleas'd it should, and when they will, it need be no hindrance to them at all.

As for those then, who urge this for their not coming to the Holy Sacrament, *viz. Their not being better'd or improv'd thereby*: My answer to them in *sum* is this. If there be any force in it, it will hold much stronger for their not coming to *Prayers*, or to the *Publick Assemblies*, and ought not so much to hinder them from *this Feast*, as from all other parts of *Worship*. But, indeed it is no just hindrance,

nor

II. So ge- it g- or a, no a- n- fit- g- te  
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nor is there sufficient excuse at all from it. Where 'tis *true*, there is no *fair excuse* in it; because we are not only bound in *Interest*, but in *strict Duty* also to Communicate. But in the case of all *good men* 'tis false, for they are really *better* by the Sacrament, tho' perhaps they do not *think* or *understand* themselves to be so. For it either *improves them in their Goodness*, as 'tis highly fit it should and will do all, who are not wanting to themselves: or at least it *keeps and continues* them in the same, which, where there is nothing more, is of it self most richly worth all the pains which they bestow upon it. And where they are not better'd at all, or not so much as might be expected; that is purely their *own Fault*, and will hinder them no longer than they have a mind it should; for when they please, they may amend it. If they are *good men*, they are *better* by the Holy Sacrament; and if they are *ill*, their being no better doth not *excuse their Neglect* thereof; and they may be better'd the *next time*, if they will take that *care* which is necessary to it: so that this ought not in any wise to be an *Hindrance* and keep them from it.

## C H A P. III.

*Of want of CHARITY.*

## The Contents.

A Sixth Hindrance is, a Fear lest they want the Charity, particularly towards Enemies, and those who have given them Provocations, which is required to it. An account what Love is, and what is not due to such Persons. 1. We are bound to shew them all the offices of Charity, which are due to our Neighbour at large, or to all Persons. This Love contains in it all the particular offices of Justice, Charity and Peace, which are due to all mankind. It is transgressed by all the opposite Instances; but by nothing more than harsh and uncandid Censures and Suspicions. The commonness, and sinfulness of this Carriage. The want of this Charity unfits men for this Feast; but so it doth for Prayers, and all other Religious Worship. 2. We are not bound to shew them all the offices of special Esteem, Trust, and Confidence, which are not fit to be placed on all men, but on such only as are qualified for them. When they sufficiently shew Repentance of their Fault, they are to be re-admitted to the same state of Favour and Friendship. We must be candid in judging when their Repentance is sufficiently evidenced. An humble Confession is ordinarily a sufficient Proof of it for the first fault; but not when it has been of

repeated. Luc. 17. 4. which seems to affirm it, answer'd. Several Cases clear'd, which are sometimes thought by Pious Souls to be a breach of Charity towards Enemies, but in reality are not. As, not forgetting injuries or unkindnesses, but still retaining a remembrance of them. Thinking the worse of those who offer'd them. Being troubled at the sight of them, as that puts them in mind of the great losses, which they have sustain'd by them. Shewing more reserve, and carrying a greater distance in Conversing with them, than with other men. These are no breach of Charity towards them, nor can be a just Hindrance from the Communion.

**A** Sixth Hindrance which keeps back several from this Holy Feast, is, their fear lest they want that Charity which is required to a worthy Participation thereof. They have some profest Enemies, that own hatred and a mischievous inclination in all their Carriage : or some false Friends and Confidants, who, though not out of Malice, yet to serve a particular turn or interest, have proved very unfaithful or Injurious ; or some impudent and unwise Dependants, who, when they meant well, perhaps, have done things very disadvantageous and displeasing to them in their business. From the Malice of some, or the Falseness of others, or the Folly of a third sort, they have received those Provocations, which they cannot yet cast out of their minds ; and when

when they remember them, they feel their hearts are much estranged from those who offer'd them; and whilst they are so, they fear they love them not as they ought, nor have that Charity towards Enemies and injurious Persons, which God requires in all worthy Communicants.

And this want of *Charity* for *Enemies* and *offensive* Persons, is urged, not only by those, who either *do*, or *wish* ill to them; who, indeed, have just cause to say they want it: But also by others, who are not Guilty of either of these towards their Enemies, and therefore have no sufficient Cause at all to say so. For many Good People, who requite no injuries to those who have provoked them, but shew them all those instances of *Justice*, *Charity*, and *Peace*, which God requires of us towards *all men*, and which are all that is due to them: Are yet afraid that they have not so much Charity for them as the Law enjoins, because they still remember their *Injuries* or *Unkindnesses*, or think the worse of their Persons, or keep a greater distance from them in their Carriage, or forbear to use them, as formerly they did, in the quality of particular Friends and Confidants, or withhold some other *Special Favours*, which are not really due

to them, nor make any breach at all of that Charity, which they ought to have for them.

' This is a great cause of *Scruple* to many honest minds, who are really troubled therewith : and particularly it is a most common *hindrance* from the Holy Sacrament : there being no Duty, I think, which the generality of men believe to be more indispensably requir'd in every worthy Communicant, than *Peace* and *Charity*. And therefore that they who want this Love of Enemies, which unfits them for this Heavenly Feast, may quickly set about the attainment thereof ; and that they who have it, may not be troubled, or held back from receiving, as if they had it not ; I shall here endeavour to give a plain state of this Point, and shew, both *what is*, and *what is not* implied in this Duty. And this I shall do in these two particulars.

1. *We are bound to shew our Enemies, and all others who have provoked us, all the Offices of general Charity, or all that Love which is due to our Neighbour at large, and to all other Persons.* So that whilst we allow our-selves in the breach of this, we are unfit for this Holy Feast, and must instantly amend, that we may be fitted for it.

But,

But,

2. We are not bound to shew them all the Offices of special Esteem, Trust, and Confidence, which are not fit to be placed promiscuously on all men, but on such only as are qualified for them. So that when we fail only in these, we are in no Fault, nor have any need to be troubled, or kept back thereby.

1. I say, we are bound to shew our Enemies, and any others, who, by their unkind, indiscreet, or injurious carriage have provoked us, all the Offices of general Charity; or all that Love, which is due to our Neighbour at large, and to all other Persons. So that if we allow our-selves in the breach of it, we are unfit for this Holy Feast, and must instantly amend, that we may be fitted for it.

We are bound to shew them all the Offices of general Charity, or to treat them with all that Love, which is due to our Neighbour at large, and to all other Persons.

How hardly soever they might be treated either among Jews or Gentiles, yet in Christianity our Enemies are Neighbours and Brethren, and ought to share in all that Love, which God requires of us towards the promiscuous Multitude of other men. For it takes off all that hatred and spiteful Resentment, which would ex-  
clude

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clude them from all good Offices; and  
sets them in the Rank of *Neighbours*;  
whom God commands us to treat with  
all those instances of Kindness, wherein  
consists the *loving our Neighbour as our-*  
*selves.* This is plain, from its not per-  
mitting us to *hate them*, as the *Jewish Law*  
*did*, but strictly enjoining us to *Love our*  
*Enemies*, Mat. 5. 44, 45. For where  
*Love* is, it naturally issues out in all these  
Duties, as there is occasion for them;  
upon which account, it is call'd the *ful-*  
*filling of the Law*, i. e. of that part there-  
of which concerns us towards men, be-  
cause *working no ill*, as St. Paul says, *to*  
*our Neighbour*, it will keep us from any  
Breach of those Laws which respect them.  
Rom. 13. 9, 10. Besides, that our Ene-  
mies are to share in all that Love which  
is due to our Neighbours, our Saviour  
plainly declares, when he singles out a  
most *bitter Enemy*, and sets him forth as  
the *Neighbour* whom the Law mentions,  
making the *Samaritane* a Neighbour, e-  
ven to a *Jewish* man, between whom  
was the most inveterate and inbred En-  
mity and Opposition. For when the  
*Lawyer* asked him, *Who is my Neighbour?*  
he tells him by the *Parable* of a *Jewish*  
*man*, who being left wounded by the *Thieves*,  
found a *Neighbour* of the good *Samaritane*,  
N that



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that 'tis any one he meets withal, though  
a *Stranger*, though an *Enemy*; yea,  
though of a *Party* and *Profession* in *Re-*  
*ligion* most odious unto his, which ordina-  
rily causes the highest and most impla-  
cable Enmities, as it did between the  
*Jews* and *Samaritanes*, who stood at so  
great a distance, as that they would not  
give or ask so much as a  
† Joh. 4. 9. † *Cup of Water* of each  
other, or have any sort  
of entercourse together. This was his  
*Neighbour*, says he, and so must thou be  
in a like Case, *gō*, and do so likewise, Luk.  
10. v. 29, to 38.

Thus are all we Christians bound to  
hold our Enemies, and those who have  
provoked us, in the same promiscuous  
Rank with all other Persons; and not-  
withstanding all their unkindnesses, or  
injurious Carriage, to look upon them  
as our Neighbours, whom we are to Love  
as we do our selves.

And that Love contains in it all the  
particular Offices of *Justice*, *Charity*, and  
*Peace*, which we owe to *Mankind* at large,  
even to all Persons.

1. It contains in it all the Duties of  
*Justice*; as namely, that we be true to  
them in all our *Speeches*, and faithful in  
all our *Promises*, and just and equal in all  
our

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our Dealings, never seizing, hurting, or detaining any thing which belongs to them; nor any ways perverting, obstructing, or infringing any Right, because 'tis theirs.

2. All the duties of *Charity*, as that we honour them for their *Virtues*, and pity them in their *Miseries*, and relieve them in their *Wants*; and, when they will take it, reprove them for their *Faults*, not passionately and publickly (which shews not any *Love* for them, but our *Wrath* and *Spleen* against them) but with great *Friendship* and *Privacy*; that we *Congratulate* with them in their *Joys*, and conceal their *Defects*, and vindicate their *injured Reputations*; when we see them loaded with *False aspersions*; that we be *Courteous* and *Condescensive*, *Meek* and *Gentle* in our *Carriage* towards them; *Candid* in putting a good *Interpretation* upon all their *Words* and *Actions*, especially such as relate to our *own selves*; placable or easie to be intreated after any *Offences*, and apt to forgive and requite them with *soft Speech*, *fair Carriage*, good *Offices*, and the like.

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3. All the Duties of Peace in maintaining Unity and Quietness, as far as lies in us, and avoiding all Strife and Variance, Clamour and Brawling with them, as with all Mankind.

\* Meas. of Christ.

Obed. B. 2.

All these, as I have \* elsewhere particularly shewn, are such Duties, as we owe to our Neighbour at large, even to all men; And then to our Enemies among them, since in Christianity they are Brethren and Neighbours too, and have a claim to the same. And these, Love and Brotherly kindness, when once they are seated in us, will be sure to effect, and make us pay to them. For he that Loveth another, as St. Paul saith, hath fulfill'd the Law. Because this, Thou shalt not commit Adultery; Thou shalt not Kill; Thou shalt not Steal; Thou shalt not bear false Witness; Thou shalt not Covet: And if there be any other Commandment. i. e. respecting others, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, Thou shalt Lovethy Neighbour as thy self. Love worketh no ill to his Neighbour, therefore Love is the fulfilling of the Law, Rom. 13. 8, 9, 10.

And since we are bound to Love our Enemies, in paying them all this Justice, Charity and Peace, which I have mentioned as due to all Persons: 'Tis plain that we fail of our bounden Duty therein, whensoever we act against it in any of these Particulars.

1. We fail of it, if at any time we do any wrong, or shew any acts of Injustice towards them. As if we falsify and lie to them, or break our Faith and Promise with them, or raise Calumnies, or report false and slanderous Stories of them, or bear false Witness against them, or wrongfully with-hold what is their due, or oppress, cozen, or defraud them, or take away their Lives, or maim their Bodies, either by Secret Arts, or open Fight, or Assassination, or the like.

2. We fail of it, if in any instances we shew our selves uncharitable, or break the Peace with them. As when we envy and repine at their good, or rejoyce at their hurt, or, suffer false stains to stick upon them without any Vindication, when it is in our Power and in our way to wipe them off; or when we speak all the ill we know of them, and backbite and revile them, especially if we do it with Aggravation, Triumph, and Scorn, when any fall of theirs has given us an occasion for so

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doing, or, when we openly upbraid them with our kindnesses, or reproach them with their own sins, or mock and deride them with their Infirmities, or affront them in our Carriage, or are Passionate, and burst out into bitterness and brawling, strife and debate with them, upon any provocation; or when we are unthankfully forgetful of their former favours, or implacable after their injuries, or thirst after revenge, and are hasty to punish, or rigorous in exactions, or such like.

All these, are a Breach of that Love and Duty, which we ought to bear towards our Enemies in common with all other persons, as might be proved, were there any need of it, of every one of the particulars. And by reason they have deserv'd ill of us, and have given us great Provocations; unless we are very circumspect, and keep a strict Guard upon our selves, in all our Discourses and Carriage towards them, we shall be in great danger to incur them more or less.

But among all the instances of uncharitableness to our Enemies, there is none whereto we are more obnoxious, and against which we ought to watch with greater carefulness, as we tender the safety of our own Souls, than rash and  
hard

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*hard Censures and Suspitions or fancying the worst Designs, and putting the worst Interpretations upon all their words and actions, when they come before us.*

This, God knows, is a most general and reigning sin among all *Adversaries*, and is daily seen, not only among the notoriously ill and irreligious, but also among those, who are otherwise very sober and devoutly serious. For even the generality of men, when the actions of their Enemies come to be scann'd before them, are very apt to turn them into an ill sense, and to make the most of them to their prejudice, and judge of them, not as indifferent and unconcern'd persons, but as they who are desirous and industrious to find Faults, and to pick out something which they may accuse in them.

And this has been every where done, not only against particular persons, but, on all hands against whole Bodies and Parties of Men, who, in any thing relating to the Times, are of different Perswasions, and either think or act not after their Projects and Opinions. For how apt have, not only private men been in the case of particular quarrels; but many also in the heat, and at the top of all Parties, in the judging of their opposites, to

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mistrust *ill* Designs even in their *good* Actions; and to impute all their *ill* ones to *unmixt malice*, without making any allowances of *forgetfulness*, *over-sight*, *impetuous heat*, or other humane Frailties; to take every thing by the *wrong* handle, and where it *might*, and *would* bear a *good* sense, were there any Love to construe it, to fix upon it an *ill* one, and to interpret it to their disadvantage. In arguing upon all their words and actions, they suck'd out nothing but the venome, and turn'd every thing into a sore about them, and were strangely rash in bestowing *opprobrious* and *ill* Names upon them, and laid about them at that rate, as if they fancied they could not exceed, either in *thinking* or in *speaking* evil of them. In all which, instead of being checked with any Remorse for it, their *Consciences* rather countenanc'd and encourag'd it. For since, as they apprehended, the cause which they contended for was good in their *own* Party, and bad in the *Party* that *opposed* it: This Carriage they call'd not *Wrath* and *Spire*, but *Zeal*, and thought accordingly that God would own and accept it.

But

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But this is a very *sinful* and *unchristian* Carriage. It is utterly contrary to the *Love of Enemies*; for Love is always inclinable to think the best, and leans, so far as the thing will bear, to the side of Favour, both in *judging* and *speaking* of all their Actions. It is plainly contrary to our *Lord's Rule*, who warns us not to judge, that we be not judged. i. e. not to be forward in passing Sentence against others, that God may not pass Sentence against us; for with what measure we mete in judging of their Actions, he will mete out to us again, Mat. 7. 1, 2. It is a direct Breach of that *Charity*, which St. Paul describes, and makes of absolute necessity to our immortal happiness. For *Charity*, says he, *thinks or surmises no evil*, it believes all things, so far as in any reason it may, to other mens advantage. And without this *Charity*, though we have the *spiritlest Zeal* for the best Parties, nay, though we give our Bodies to be burnt as Martyrs, it profits us nothing i. e. towards God's acceptance, 1 Cor. 13. 3, 5, 7. Since it is a *Zeal* which is not peaceable as well as pure, since it is not full of *Mercy* and good Fruits, but issues out in a bitter and *invenom'd Spirit*, which turns all things to the worst, and is bent in all points to the hurt of those



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who fall under it: 'Tis plain it can never come from *God*, who being *Mercy* and *Love* it self, can never be Author of so much *Cruelty* and *Hatred*; but must be ascribed to our own *Lusts*, and to the *infernal Spirits*, as its true Parents and Abettors. And this *St. James* expressly says of that *bitter Zeal*, which takes not a tender heart, and bowels of *Love* or *Charity* along with it. If it were that from above, saith he, it would first indeed be pure, but then it would next be peaceable, gentle, easie to be intreated, full of *Mercy* and good Fruits. If God kindled it, since he is *Love* it self, and requires us to *Love* our Enemies as our selves, these first Fruits of *Love* and *Mercy* would be sure to accompany it. But if all these are shut out, and it dwells in an hurtful and imbitter'd Spirit; if that be a bitter envying  
† *Mixed* or † *Zeal* that dwells  
in your Hearts, then, adds he, glory not in the same; for this descends not from above, so as to have God for the Author of it, but is sensual, i. e. arising from our own Passions, nay, Devilish, being set on by the malicious Agency of *Infernal Spirits*, *Jam. 3. 14, 15, 16, 17.*

And

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And thus it appears when really we are out of Charity with any persons who have provoked us, and fall short of that Love of Enemies, which God's Law requires of us. For then we Love them not as we ought, when we are any ways *unjust* to them, or apt upon every little occasion to *strive* and *comend* with them, or deal *uncharitably* by them in any Conversation, particularly in *malicious Surmizes* and *Suspitions*, and *uncandid Censures*, which are so general in all, but more abundant in our Times, when the Nation is divided into *Parties*, and men seem to have forgot that there is any Religion towards *Enemies*, or any Love due to them, who have given them personal Provocations, or side with a Party opposite to that which they espouse.

And if upon a survey of our Carriage in these particulars, we find this to be our Case, and that we are thus out of Charity, and have not forgiven any who have provoked us: 'Tis very true, whilst that lasts, we are *unfit for the Holy Sacrament*, since he who worthily joyns in it, must come in *Love*, and have freely forgiven all the World. But then we are also equally unfit to *pray*, or to ask the forgiveness of our own sins at God's hands;

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hands; since, if we pray in *Wrath* and *Enmity*, he will not hear us. Nay, this *not forgiving others*, turns all our own Prayers into a *Curse*, and makes them a dreadful and downright *Imprecation* against our selves. For when we say this Prayer——*forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us*, with *malice* in our Hearts: The plain English of it is, that God would *revenge* our *Trespasses* on our heads, as we are ready to *revenge their Trespasses on theirs*: Which is so bold and Fool-hardy an Address, as no man, I presume, will put up to God, who considers what he says.

When really we are out of *Charity* therefore, and have not forgiven others; we are not only unfit to Communicate, but to the full as unfit to make any Prayers, or place any hope in Almighty God. And when once he is sensible that this is his state, there is no wise man will continue in it, but will forthwith resolve to lay aside all his *Resentments*, and get out of it.

This he may find *difficult*, indeed, when he sets about it; but it is *absolutely necessary* to be done, and unless he would incur the *Wrath* of God, and the *Eternal* pains of Hell, which are ten thousand times.

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times *more* difficult, he must go through therewith. But if he considers how much he himself needs to be forgiven, and how he has infinitely more provoked God, than his Brother has provoked him; he will find it no very hard matter to forgive him for *Christ's* sake, though it might be hard to do it for his *own*. And besides, if he will not dwell upon the injuries or unkindnesses which are so provoking, but *cast them out of his mind* so soon as he perceives they are enter'd into it; it will yet be much easier to him. He cannot *quite* forget them, it may be, so as that he shall never more think of them: But when they happen to start up in his thoughts, without his leave, he can chuse whether he will *harbour* and give way to them. And if he will be careful to do that, the great difficulty of Forgiveness is removed. For it is our dwelling upon an injury received, and harkening to ill suggestions which *aggravate* the deed, and the *malice* or *unworthiness* of him who offered it, that heightens our Resentment thereof to that degree, that we have much ado before we can bring our selves to be reconciled. So that if we would not harbour and entertain the thoughts of it, the forgiveness of an injury would be found.

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found much more easie. And this Remedy St. Paul prescribes, to prevent all *Wrath and Revengeful Carriage*. Let not the Sun go down upon your *Wrath*, neither give place to the Devil, or to a \* Calumniator and \* Τῷ Διαβόλῳ. Accuser, i. e. to exasperating Thoughts and Insinuations, whether suggested to us by our own minds, or by the whisperings of others, *Eph. 4. 26, 27.*

And thus having proved that we are bound to shew our *Enemies*, and those who have provoked us, all the Offices of general Charity, or all that Love which is due to our Neighbour at large, even to all other Persons; so that whilst we allow our selves in the breach of them, we are unfit for this Holy Feast, and must instantly amend, that we may be fitted for it. I proceed now,

2. To shew that we are not bound to shew them all the Offices of special esteem, trust and confidence, which are not fit to be placed promiscuously on all men, but on such only as are qualified for them: So that when we fail only in these, we are in no fault, nor have any need to be troubled, or kept back thereby.

We are not bound to make an Enemy a familiar Companion, or a particular Friend, a Partner of our Secrets, a Sharer of our Trust, or an Officer in our Business; but may be more afraid of him, and keep more at a distance from him, and use more Caution and Reserve in conversing with him than with other men. As for all the instances of general Charity, indeed, they are due upon a Reason which is common to our Enemies with others, *i. e.* their being Men and Christians: So that they ought to share in them, and we fail of our Duty towards them, when at any time we withhold them from them. But as for these marks of special esteem and confidence; they are founded on particular reasons and fitness of Persons, as likeness of Humour, Fidelity of Affection, aptness for our Affairs, or the like: So that in them we are not bound to our Enemies, who are plainly unfit through their profest Enmity, or treacherous Falseness; nay, nor to any one among others; but are left at liberty to make such choice, as shall seem best to our own Prudence. This Liberty must in all Equity and Reason be allowed us, because upon a right choice of those Persons the innocence, ease and safety of our Lives most nearly depends; and with-  
out

out being left to discretion therein, we must unavoidably throw our selves into inextricable Snares, and numberless Calamities. And that it is allowed, our Saviour clearly intimates, when he recommends to us the *wisdom of Serpents*, bidding us shew all the prudence we can devise, so long as no unrighteousness mixes therewith, but it is wholly guided by the *Doves innocence*, Mat. 10. 16. And in this he has gone before us in his own *Practice*. For tho' he loved those who believed on him, Joh. 2. with all that Love which his Law requires, i. e. with a general Affection : Yet, as the Evangelist tells us, he did not trust, or commit himself to them, because he knew all men, v. 23, 24.

So long then as we require no Injuries upon our Enemies, or others that have offended us, nor are wanting to them in any point of Justice, Charity, or Peace, which is due to all Persons ; we are not vncharitable towards them, in thinking the worse of their persons, or carrying our selves at a greater distance towards them, or forbearing to use them in the quality of particular Friends and Confidants, as we did formerly, or withdrawing some other special Favours, which their Fault has justly forfeited, and they have no more claim to.

In-

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Indeed, if afterwards they *Repent* of their Offence, which makes the breach between us, and amend that Fault which unfits them for our *Business*, or *Converse*; when only *we our selves* are concern'd in their re-admission, and the things we have to intrust with them, are not of that weight as that we may justly be *jealous* over them, and we have no other cause but that offence to exclude them from the same, 'tis a Christian part, not only to retain them in a general Charity in common with all other persons, but also to re-admit them to the *same* State, which formerly they held with us.

When the concern is not purely *our own* but we are set to secure *higher*, and more *publick Ends*; there, 'tis true, we are not bound presently to re-admit them to the same state upon their Repentance. And thus it is in the point of *Discipline*, wherein the Sin is not presently pardoned, so soon as the Criminal has Repented of it: But the punishment is oft-times continued, (as it was in the *lasting Excommunications* of the *Primitive Christians*.) that the durableness of the smart may both *terrifie others* from offending in like manner, and *amend themselves* by begetting a more lasting memory and abhorrence of their offences. And thus

'tis



'tis too in point of *Publick Trust*, when we act not for our selves, but pursuant to our care of others : For there we may lay aside *Penitents*, because they have once sinn'd, thinking there is more safety in those who have still stood firm, and kept always innocent. And thus St. *Paul* did with *Mark*, who had † once † *Act. 13. 13.* declined the toil and peril of *Converting the Gentile World*. For, after he had freely forgiven that tergiversation, yet, says St. *Luke*, in the dispute betwixt *Barnabas* and him, he thought not good to take him for a Companion, because he had once deserted them, and went not with them to the work; but preferred *Silas* before him, who had never flinch'd from it, *Act. 15. 37, 38, 40.*

But when only we our selves are concerned in their re-admission ; and when the things which we have to intrust with them are not of that weight, as we may well be jealous over them, (in which case, indeed, a great Caution is requisite;) and when we have no other Cause but that Offence to exclude them from our kindness or Confidence, (For if upon other accounts the choice at first was ill made, and either already is, or

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or *may* be alter'd to our Benefit, since the fixing on any man for a Friend or Dependant, is not a necessary Duty, but a discretionary free thing, we are not blame-worthy in correcting it :) When the Case, I say thus stands, as to all those particulars, 'tis a *Christian* act to admit returning *Penitents* to the same state, which they held before they offended us. For when once they have Repented of a Fault, they are as fit for our *Affairs* or *Friendship*, as they were before they committed it. So that if any marks of our displeasure remain upon them still after that, which in the present state of things might conveniently enough be alter'd, it is not *their* *unfitness*, but *our* *Resentment* which is the cause thereof. And when we go so to ease our offended minds by their *loss*, this looks not like *forgiving a Trespass*, but *revenging* it. And this Re-admission to their former state is according to *St. Paul's* Direction, *Col. 3. 13. to forgive others, even as Christ forgives us* ; for he admits Penitents to the state of innocent Persons, pardoning without  
\* Heb. 8. 12. upbraiding and quite\* *forgetting*, as if the sin had never been done ; and according to what he prescribes, 1. Cor. 14. 20. when he bids

bids us in *malice* to be *Children*; for after once they are made Friends, they forget all, and return to the same degree of Love and Confidence again. The wise Son of Sirach says, indeed, that for four things, viz. *upbraiding and Pride, and disclosing of Secrets, and a Treacherous wound*, every Friend will depart, and never more be reconciled, Eccles. 22. 22. But he speaks only of what ordinarily is done; or of what might have been done among the Jews: not of what may now be done among us, of whom God expects an higher forgiveness, after the manner of *Children*, and the Example of Christ Jesus. So that when once they have sufficiently Repented of their Sins against us 'tis fit that we forgive them to as full purpose, as if they had never sinned at all.

And in judging of this Repentance, we ought not to be *strict* and *rigid* in standing upon exact proofs; but to be *candid*, and apt to interpret all signs of it to the best Sence, leaning to the side of Love and easie Admittance. If they take shame to themselves, and are so far humbled, as *penitentially* to confess their sin: 'Tis a great Argument of their being set against it, and, in the case of the first offence especially, a strong Presumption

tion that they will no more commit the same. Altho' when once these Confessions become *Customary*, and are still made and broke anew upon every fresh occasion: It is a sign only that they mean well; and would *amend* if they could; but no Presumption that they *will* do so, since their Penitent Resolution plainly is too weak, and their Lusts upon the Tryal, prove still too strong for it. And since these Confessions are manifestly an incompetent proof of their having thoroughly Repented; we cannot be bound to believe them, or obliged thereupon to a return of Friendship.

Our Saviour, indeed, tells us, that *If our Brother Trespass against us seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again, saying, I Repent; we must forgive him, Luk. 17. 4.* And here, if by forgiving, were meant restoring to the same state of Favour and Affection; this would infer his Profession of Repentance, tho' never so often broke, to be a sufficient Demonstration of the same, and a just Ground of our return to Friendship with him. But this, I suppose, speaks only of such forgiveness, as admits him, not to the same state which he held with us before, but only to the state of a Neighbour

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*bour at large, or of other persons. And albeit this is due to him, whether he say, I Repent, or no; yet doth our Saviour here enjoin it upon his Repentance, not because the thing required it, but that he might more directly oppose the Jewish Doctrine in this point, which was too scanty in forgiving even a returning Penitent. For this they limited to a small number of times, it being a received Rule among the Rabbins, that\* after one has forgiven any Person thrice, he has gone as far as he needs, and that no man is bound to forgive the fourth offence.*

\* Dr. Lightfoot.  
Hor. Heb. in  
loc. è Jom.

To forgive an injury then so far as not to return it, nor to be wanting in any Neighbourly Office toward him that offered it, is plain a Duty, upon his saying he Repents of it: Yea, as hath been shewn, whether he Repents or no. But to the evidencing of such a Repentance, as would oblige us to confide in him again, and as leaves no imputation of unfitness in him, but only of our Rensentment for a reason of our distance from him, we may require more than his saying he Repents, and giving us his bare word and promise, after they have several times deceived us. For no wise man would trust to

to that, which is oftner wrong than right as every Person's word is, who hitherto has always failed to keep his word : And Christianity in no case forbids us to be *wise* in our own Concerns, but directs us to be as *subtle as Serpents*, so long as we are careful withal to keep as *innocent as Doves*, Mat. 10. 16. It commends us for being *prudent* in business, and seeing before-hand to prevent *other mens sins*, by cutting off from them all opportunities ; and it may be *our own* too, by putting by those Temptations, which would *always* trouble and molest our *Peace*, and *often-times* indanger our *innocence*. So that altho' we are to be very *favourable* in construing the sufficiency of our Enemies Repentance ; yet may we be *discreet* withal, and are not to be *foolishly blind*, and unreasonably easie in approving it. We must only lean to the side of Favour, when there are such signs, as to a Wise man look towards it ; but not rashly conclude, he has sufficiently Repented, when there are no likely signs thereof at all. But the fault of men seldom lies on this side, of being *over-easie* to be *fully reconciled* ; so that the other, of being *over-rigid* ; is that which the generality of men ought to guard themselves against. And therefore in judging of the sufficiency of their Repentance,

this

this is the great Rule which we are to take along with us, viz. That *as it is one part of Charity fully to forgive our offending Brother, and re-admit him to our former favour, on his Repentance; so 'tis another to be favourable in judging whether he has sufficiently Repented, and given such proofs thereof as ought to be believed, or no.*

As for these farther effects, of Love towards Enemies, and those who have provoked us then, viz. *our not barely retaining them in a general Charity and Affection, as we do all other men, but re-admitting them to special Trust, Familiarity and Friendship, which they had in their former Station; they are not always due to them, nor are at all proper to be placed on them, but only when they Repent and Amend those Faults and unfitnesses, which made them unqualified for the same. So that whilst their Impenitence lasts, or that change doth not sufficiently appear to us, we are not obliged to express our Love in these at all.*

And since we are not bound to them, nor are guilty of any Sin in omitting them; that omission can never unfit us for the *Holy Communion*. So that whilst we shew them all the offices of *general kindness*, and are wanting in nothing but

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but *special Favours*, which belong not to them in their present Circumstances; we have all the Charity for them which our Lord requires, and therefore, if we have nothing else to hinder us, may readily joyn in this Feast of Love when God invites us to it.

And this might serve for a sufficient Answer, to those *supposed* instances of *uncharitableness* mentioned above, which hinder several *fit* and *worthy* Persons from partaking in this Holy Ordinance. But for their *fuller* satisfaction in these points, I will add something concerning each of the *Particulars*.

1. They fear they have not that Charity for *Enemies* and *offensive Persons*, which God's Law requires of them, because *they cannot forget as well as forgive, but still remember their injuries or unkindnesses.*

But did not our *Saviour* himself, that perfect pattern of Forgiveness, remember \* *Peter's Denial* of him after he had *bitterly Repented* of it? Did he not sufficiently hint it to him, by questioning him *three times* about his *Love of him*, answerable to his having *three times denied him*; that by calling it  
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over upon his Remembrance, he might  
encrease his care and watchfulness against  
it afterwards? So that 'tis not the bare  
Remembrance, but remembering them to  
*evil purposes*, which is to be blamed in us.  
When they bear in mind the evils which  
they have received then, let them con-  
sider whether they do it to any ill ef-  
fect. Do they think of them to up-  
braid their Enemies therewith, or to do  
them a shame for the same, and sit as Spies  
upon their Actions only that they may find  
Fault, and aggravate Miscarriages, or to  
return the ill to them again in trans-  
gressing any of those instances of *common*  
*Justice* or *Charity* above recited? If their  
Remembrance thereof doth not provoke  
them into any of these sinful expressions  
of *hatred*, and *ill will* against them, they  
need not be troubled at it, for there is  
no hurt done thereby. It is not in the  
Power, it may be, to forget the wrongs  
they have received; for when the know-  
ledge of things is once fix'd in our minds,  
though we can forbear to reflect and in-  
sist on them, wherein the great danger  
lies, yet can we not lose that knowledge  
when we please. So that after we have  
received an injury, we are not to be bla-  
med barely for remembering it; since we  
are no more able always wholly to forget

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what has *past*, than we were at *first* to be wholly *ignorant* and *insensible* of it whilst it was present. Nay, in many Cases, if we *could*, it is not *advisable* that we *should* forget it. For whilst the injurious person is *Impenitent*, and *ready* to repeat the same again, the remembrance of the harm he has done us will do us good, in *quickning our care*, and making us more *wary* and *watchful* to prevent his doing us any more. But if once he has Repented of what he did, so as that he ought to be admitted to his *former state*; then, indeed, it may seem very desirable, that as much as in us lies, we should *forget* it, by giving no entertainment or incouragement to the Thoughts thereof. For the Remembrance then can serve no good Ends, but may prove a very great snare to us, in making us *backward in kindness*, or *fit to catch fire on small Provocations*, or *uncandid in interpreting his words*, or *actions afterwards*. It will not be our *sin*, till these, or some other ill effects are wrought thereby. But it will be our *Temptation*, whereby 'tis very like, we shall sometimes be much indangered. So that then it may be very fit to lay it *aside*, for fear of receiving hurt by it.

2. They fear that, after an *unkindness* or *injury* received, they are not so *Charitable* as they ought, because *they think the worse of him who offered it.*

Now if they are *uncandid* in judging *the injurious action*, i. e. if they impute it to the worst cause, and make not those Allowances of *forgetfulness*, *over-sight*, and the like, which it would well admit of, and which Love would fix upon it, were it to make the construction: 'Tis true they are so far wanting in their duty of *Love to their Enemy*. This, indeed, is hard for us always to avoid, and therefore we must be sure to take the more care, and keep the stricter watch against it. And if after all, through *unwariness*, through an *Accusers* laying out only the interpretations of the ill side, or our own suspicious temper insensibly leaning towards it, we are engaged in an *uncandid Construction* e'er we can discover the same: There our *inconsideration* and *unadvisedness* will be our excuse for it. But so soon as ever we can observe it, or are shewn how the action is equally capable of a *favourable Sense*, we must strike in with it, and correct our former *hasty Judgment*. So that if by *thinking worse*, they mean that they think worse than needs of the *Action*, and incur an *uncandid interpretation*; this is

is the Sentence which they are to pass upon it. Either it was an *innocently inconsiderate escape*, and then their *haste* and *unadvisedness* will *excuse* it : Or it was a *known sin*, i. e. it either was, or, had they not been grossly partial, and evidently bent to think ill, would have been committed with observation ; and then their *Repentance* and *Amendment* must *atone* for it.

But if by *thinking worse*, they mean, that when the Fact is evidently ill, they have a *worse opinion of the Person* ; there is no want of Charity in that, because their ill opinion is upon just cause and they cannot in Reason think better of him. They judge only according to the plain *Truth* of things, and that the best Souls may safely do, and it is no uncharitable part in any of them. For thus our Lord, thought of *Judas*, when he most affectingly † suggested to him the base-

† Luc. 22. 48.

ness of *his Betraying him*, and that too *with a kiss*, the sign of Friendship and Affection. And thus the *Apostles* thought of the *Jews*, whom they looked upon as \* *wicked Murderers*, for our Saviour's Crucifixion. And thus St. Paul

\* Act. 2. 13. & 7. 52.

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thought of *Peter* when he blamed him for his † *sinful compliance* and *dissimulation*. And thus † *Gal. 2. 11. 12, 13, 14.* God himself thinks of us upon our miscarriages, for he sees them, and dislikes us for them, and thereby \* *magnifies* \* *Lnc. 6. 35.* the Honour of his *Patience* and *loving kindness*, in that he is good, even to the *unthankful* and the *evil*, and shews us Favour notwithstanding them. And thus also may we very *innocently*, and *charitably* too think ill of any others, when they have evidently deserved it and given us just occasion for it. For the work of *Charity*, or Love to others, is not to make us blind in a plain Case, and see no Faults in them when they are clear before us. For this is *Love without Eyes*, which is by no means the *Love of wise men*, or the *Charity of Christians*. It is not always possible in nature, nor could be shewn if we should attempt it. For, when other mens Faults are evident, there is no way of being dark against the Sun, or shutting out the Light whilst our Eyes are open. But if it always could be done, yet is it not in any wise proper to be *advised*. For if we must see no hurt in any Persons, it unavoidably destroys all wise choice of *Friends* and *Companions*,

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panions, Relations and Dependants ; all  
seasonable *Council* and *Instruction*, *Reproof*  
and *Admonition* ; and so produces most  
sad effects, both in *Conversation* and *Re-  
ligion*. The work of Charity to others  
then, is not to wink against a Fault when  
'tis apparent, but not to be *quick in dis-  
cerning*, and *forward in presuming* it, when  
there is *no just Cause* to impute any Fault  
to them. So that if we would be Cha-  
ritable to our Enemies, we must not be-  
lieve ill of them, till it sufficiently is  
made out to us ; nor conclude them  
faulty in a doubtful case, when there are  
Reasons on both sides, and they are as  
likely to be otherwise ; nor presume  
they had an ill design in that, which  
lies as open to a good, and might have  
no hurt at all in it. In these cases,  
where their offence is not clearly prov-  
ed, it is uncharitableness in us to be  
hasty in believing them to be guilty  
thereof. But when their *Enmity* is *profeſt*,  
and their *unkindness*, or *injurious dealing*, is  
*evident* ; 'tis no Duty in any man to shut  
his Eyes against the Light, nor any un-  
charitableness at all to esteem them the  
less for it, We may think him a *Dis-  
honest man*, who has wilfully *injured* us ;  
and him a *False Friend* who has *betray'd*  
our *Secrets* to our *Prejudice*, as our Savi-

our *Christ* did *Judas* ; and that he is not so kind to us as he *professes*, who refuses to *do good* to us when he might do it. When we judge of Persons not from *rash Surmises*, but from clear *Evidence* and *Experience*, we may judge as we find cause; and if we judge ill of them, it is not because we are inclined to think hardly of them, but because they have deserved to be hardly thought of ; so that our ill Opinion is owing purely to their Faults, and not to any want of *Charity* in our selves.

3. Some Persons of *Fassionate Natures* fear they have not that *Charity* for Enemies, which is requir'd of all good men, because, when some have been most mischievous to them, *their hearts are troubled*, and *they are inwardly moved as often as they see them*; not with any *Angry* or *Revengeful Passion*, which would do hurt to their Enemies, but only with a *sad Remembrance* of *their own Losses*, which they have sustained by them.

Now where this is really the Case, (and they who are concerned must be faithful to their own Souls in judging whether it be or no) if there be any Fault for them to answer for, it is not *want of Charity towards their Enemies*, but *want of Patience towards God*, and of *Contentment*

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*ment in their own Condition.* They shew no uncharitableness towards their Enemies thereby, since they have no Wrathful intent to seek their hurt, nor have the least desire to return the Injuries which they have suffer'd from their hands. They are troubled at the sight of them, indeed; but that is only as they put them in mind of their own Miseries, which they have occasioned. They are grieved to see them, as they would to be to see the *Picture of a Departed Friend*, whose Death went very near to them, *i. e.* only as it calls into their Thoughts that loss, which is very afflict- ing. And this *Grief*, whatever it may be with *Impatience*, is not chargeable with any *Uncharitableness* towards our Enemies. For it is no part of the Charity which we owe them, to be insensible of what befalls our selves, so that they cannot complain of us for lamenting our own miseries. Nor can they complain of us for doing it at their presence, because they being the cause of all, the sight of them may well bring it to our Remem- brance; And if we may be sorry at all for our own unhappiness, we may be allowed to grieve then especially, when we have those things before us, which



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are most apt to represent and suggest it to us.

So long then as they are careful so to *moderate* their Grief for what is lost, (and they must be watchful in this point) as that it doth not make them *distrust* God, nor *repine* at what he has order'd, nor settle into an *habitual Discontent*, nor is otherwise *sinful or intemperate* ; it need be no scruple to their minds, nor hinder them from the Holy Sacrament. They may endeavour to prevent it, both for their own *ease and safety*, that they may neither be *pain'd* nor *tempted* therewith : And to this end it may be very advisable so far as they well may, to avoid the *presence of the injurious Person*, till they have so well digested their Loss, as that they can look on him without trouble. But if at any time they meet, and their Hearts are sorrowful at the sight ; so long as this Grief is not in it self sinful or intemperate, nor has any angry motions und expressions of Revenge accompanying it, they need not be put into doubts and scruples with it, since their state is not disturb'd, nor their Souls at all endanger'd thereby.

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4. They are afraid they have not such Charity for their Enemies as they ought, because *they are not so free with them, nor repose the same trust in them as they formerly did, but carry themselves with more Reserve, and at a greater distance from them, than they used to do before the breach was made betwixt them.*

But so long as their Enemies are *Impenitent*, all this has no hurt in it: So that they ought not to be hindred from the Holy Sacrament, or affrighted by it. For this wariness in Conversing with our Enemies, is no more than *Christ* himself shew'd in Conversing with the *Jews*; who would not walk openly among them, because they sought to kill him, Joh. 7. 1, & C. 11. 53, 54. It is no more than he taught his *Disciples* to use, when he sent them forth as *Sheep in the in the midst of Wolves*; for then he bid them take to themselves all the wary *Wisdom* and prudent *Care of Serpents*, Mat. 10. 16. Indeed, if any one who injures or offends us, expresses himself sorry for what he has done, and sufficiently Repents thereof; we ought, as I have shewn, to admit him to his former state, and to treat him, now he is a *Penitent*, as *God doth us, or as Children do their Play-fellows,*

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*fellows, i. e.* as if he had never sinn'd, but had kept always innocent. But still we see, that we may very lawfully, and very wisely too, withdraw from him our *Particular Familiarity, Trust, or Friendship*. If we find a Person *Dishonest once*, till we see him a New man, we are not bound to trust him a *second time*; for that were to give him an opportunity of *committing*, and put us into the danger of *suffering* the same again from him. If 'tis his Temper to *fall foul* upon us in *Discourse*, or to be *passionate*, or *reproachful* upon light occasions; till it appears that he has learned to *Act* otherwise, we are not bound to use his Company and Acquaintance; for that were not only to throw away our own ease, but to endanger our own *Meekness, Peace, and other Virtues*, by *casting our-selves upon Temptations*; whenas we ought to be so far from seeking them our-selves, that we are

† Mat. 6. 13.

† taught to pray daily against those, which

*God's Providence* might allot for us. If he lays wait to *over-reach*, or is industrious to *vex*, or is any ways *uneasie* or *prejudicial* to us in his Conversation, we may lawfully carry our selves at a distance from him, till he has

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has reformed those *Vices*, or corrected those *ill Tempers* which harm or annoy us, and shew'd us that now we may come nearer to him with safety to our selves. This distance we may use towards any Persons who offend against us, out of a *Natural Love* and *Care* for our *own selves*; but if they are our *Children* or *Servants*, or any ways *Subject* to us, and *Dependant* on us, there is still a more obliging Reason for the same, and that is *their Amendment* and *Reformation* likewise. For when the Fault is great enough to bear it, these marks of our Displeasure are a necessary part of *Discipline*, and altogether fit to be used, to make them duly sensible of their offence, and afraid ever after to repeat it. Which is so far from being an *unkind* part towards them, that in reality it is the *truest* way of *shewing kindness*, being the most proper course to amend them, and to bring them back at once to *their former state of innocence*, and to all expressions of *our Favour* too.

And thus it appears, that so long as we are careful to shew our Enemies all that *Justice*, *Charity* and *Peace*, which is due to our *Neighbour at large*, and to all other persons; we have as  
much

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much Love for them as God requires, though we *still remember their Injuries, and Unkindnesses*, or *think the worse of their Persons* as we have just cause, or use more Reserve, and keep a greater distance in our Carriage towards them, and the like, than we did before they had provoked us. We shew all the Love which is expected, when we are not wanting to them in any Offices of *common Charity and Neighbourhood*. This makes us accepted with Almighty God, and so fits us for the *Holy Sacrament*: So that although we do not admit them to our *particular Esteem and Friendship*, whilst they have not sufficiently evidenc'd that *Repentance*, which should qualifie them for the same, that ought not to put us back, and hinder us from partaking thereof.

As for *these Hindrances* then, which detain some good People from this *Feast*, viz. *their remembring injuries, or thinking the worse of their Enemies, or carrying themselves at a distance towards them, or excluding them from all particular Trust and Confidence, and the like*; so long as they shew them all that Love, which is due to all Men out of *Common Charity and Neighbourhood*, and are ready

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ready to shew them *more* when their *Re-  
pentance* has made them fit to receive it ;  
they ought not in any wise to put them  
by it. They are no Breach of that Cha-  
rity which God has required, and there-  
fore do not unfit them for the Holy Sa-  
crament ; so that when they are all  
their hindrance, they need not stay  
away, but may chearfully approach there-  
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CHAP.

## C H A P. IV.

*Of Law-Suits.*

## The Contents.

*They are an Hindrance from the Communion, when there is sin in them. They are not sinful in themselves, which is shewn, 1. From the necessity of them. 2. From the Magistrates Office being appointed for them. 3. From God's taking Legal Determinations upon himself, as if he were the Author thereof. 4. From Courts erected by consent in the Apostles Days, which ministred to them. These St. Paul prescribed to the Corinthians: 1 Cor. 6. They are the Assemblies mentioned Jam. 2. 2, 5. From our Saviour's, and St. Paul's Practice, who, in claiming the Benefit of Judicial Proceſs, warranted and authorized it. An objection from Mat. 5. 38, 39, 40. considered: which is shewn, not to condemn defending our selves in any case, when others implead us; nor moving Suits in all cases, but only in case of lighter Losses and Indignities, such as our Saviour there mentions, or making them minister to Revenge in any others, which are of more importance, And 1 Cor. 6. 7. answered, and shewn to speak only of the same. But they are sinful,*

*1. When*

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1. *When they are begun upon an unjustifiable Ground. Such they are always are, 1. When they are Vindictive, not Reparative; as when we sue insolvent Persons; or others upon such Words or Actions, for which, besides costs, no Damages that are valuable are like to be allotted us. 2. When they are for Reparation of small things, which do not countervail the evils and hazards of a Suit, but ought to be a matter of Patience and Forgiveness, and so should be put up without recourse to Judicatures. In judging of this smallness, we must not estimate by our own Pride and Passions; but by the reality of things, and the judgment of indifferent, humble, and dispassionate Persons. This is true, not only in case of Injuries to our own selves, but also in case of Trust, when we have the charge of others.* 2. *Suits are sinful, when they are carried on by a sinful management: As they are, when they make us Transgress any of those Duties towards our Adversaries, which oblige us towards all Persons. To avoid all these in suing, is an hard point: So we must be slow in commencing an Action, and very circumspect when we are forced upon it. The Answer to this Handrance sum'd up.*

**B**ESIDES those Particulars, which I have consider'd in the last Chapter, there is another want of Charity, which may seem of greater weight, and which is most commonly pleaded in Excuse of mens abstaining from the Holy Sacrament; and that is, the point of *Law-Suits*. For this is very frequently given



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given as a Reason why men dare not receive the Communion, because they have a *Legal Controversie with their Neighbours, and a Suit depending*

Now as to *Law-Suits*, when they have *no sin* in them: they are like all other *indifferent* things, and need not hinder men: but when they are *sinful*, they are like all other *sins*, i. e. they unfit us till we shew *Repentance*, and ought to hinder us so long as we continue in them. But as then they are an hindrance to a *worthy Receiving*; so are they equally to a *worthy Prayer*, and to all *just hopes of Heaven*. Whilst we go on with them, we cannot pray to God, or think to have our sins pardon'd, or, should we be snatcht away to Judgment in this state, expect to be happy in another World. And this is a state, wherein no considerate man will persist for one moment. But when he sees his Suit is so offensive unto God, and brings his Eternal Welfare into so great hazard, he will either learn to manage it more innocently, so as that he may no longer offend thereby; or break it off without delay, and instantly put an end to it. And when once he has done this, or is fully purposed in his own mind so to do; he is again a Friend of God, and fit to joyn in the Holy

Holy Sacrament, as well as in Prayers, or in any other Part of Worship.

Thus doth the weight of this Hindrance from the Holy Communion, lie in the innocence, or unlawfulness of the Suit which is depending. And therefore that Persons at Law may know, when they are unfit to Communicate till they have put a stop to their Guilt, and when they are fit for the same, during their Prosecution of it: I shall here state the case of Law-Suits, and shew when a Tryal is our Fault, and when 'tis Faultless, that so we may know both when we need not be hindred from the Holy Table, and also when we ought to be hindred thereby.

In pursuit of this, I shall endeavour to clear up these two Particulars.

1. *A Suit at Law is not a thing unlawful in it self, but may be innocent, if nothing else comes in to make a sin thereof.* But then,

2. *It is our sin, and a matter of our account, when it is either upon an unjustifiable Ground, or carried on by a sinfull management.*

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1. I say, a *Suit at Law* is not a thing unlawful in it self, but may be innocent, if nothing else comes in to make a Sin thereof.

It is no unlawful thing barely to dispute a Title, or to bring an Action; it is in some Cases allowed, as well as in others it is prohibited: So that a man may be Faultless who has a Suit, unless something more comes in to make him a Transgressor. The offence lies not in the Nature of it, so as to be inseparable from the Thing; but only in the Cause, or in the manner of Suing. For as St. Paul said of the Law of God among the Jews, so may we of the Laws of our several Countries; the Law is a good thing, if a man use it lawfully, 1 Tim. i. 8. it is no sin to use it, or take the benefit of it; but only to transgress some other Precept, or joyn some other sin therewith when we do make use thereof.

Now this may appear,

1. From the necessity of *Law-suits*.
2. From the *Magistrates Office* being appointed for them.
3. From God's taking a *Legal Determination* upon himself, as if he were the Author thereof.
4. From *Courts* being Erected by consent in the *Apostles Days*, to Minister thereto.
5. From

5. From the Practice of our Blessed Saviour, and St. Paul, who claimed the Benefit of Judicial Process, and thereby plainly warranted and authorized it.

1. It appears, I say, from the necessity of Law-suits. A Tryal at Law must needs be innocent in it self when nothing else corrupts it, because it is a thing which we cannot want, and there is no living in this World without it. For take away Law, which would secure *innocent mens Properties*, and bridle all *Envious, Angry, Spiteful, Covetous, Insolent, and Ambitious mens rapacious, and eneroaching Humours*: And, since all places are fully stored with these injurious Tempers (the Wicked being by far the greatest numbers) the *Quiet and Conscientious* must flee into *Woods and Desarts*; or, if they stay to Associate with others, they will every where become a *Prey*, to their *greedy, and usurping Neighbours*. If there were no Laws to protect them, there were no living in this World for good Men; and in effect there would be no Laws, if it were a sin in them to try a Title, or Right themselves by them. For no man, who had a mind to do wrong, would be aw'd from doing it, by a Law that is always to be a Sword in a Scabbard, and must never be pleaded against him, or  
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executed upon him, when he transgresses it. The use of Law then in this World, is absolutely necessary to *all Society*, to *keep Peace* and *Justice* in all *Converse*, and to *protect* and *encourage* all such as desire to *serve God*, and to be *Conscientious*. And since there is that necessity of it for God's Service, and all *Virtuous Ends*: It cannot in its own Nature be a thing offensive, and unlawful to us. It cannot be it self a Sin, which God has made so absolutely necessary to keep all others out: It must needs be allowed by him, since without it, his own ends of *Peace* and *Justice* cannot be attain'd. It is at least sure an *innocent*, if not a *good* thing, which gives the only protection to all *Goodness*, and without which there is no living for *Good Men* in *Societies*, where they may do God publick Service, and draw in others, nor indeed any safe abode for them upon the Earth at all.

(2. That a Suit at Law is not *sinful* in it self, but may sometimes be *innocent*, appears from the *Magistrates Office* being appointed for it.

One part of the *Magistrates Office* lies indeed, in *protecting* his Subjects against all *Foreign Force* and *Invasions*. But his most ordinary and constant work, is to administer *Justice*, and maintain *Peace* among  
them

themselves, which is done by *hearing Causes*, and *judging in all Controversies and Arraignments*, giving Sentence on the side which the Law Favours, and where the Right lies. Thus is it the Magistrates Office, to *hear Causes or Suits at Law*, and to *decide* them. And this work he doth not assume to himself, either *without*, or *against* God's liking; but *according to his appointment*, and altogether *with his approbation*. For *by me*, says *Wisdom*, *Kings Reign*, and *Princes Decree Justice*, Prov. 8. 15. And *the Powers that be*, says *St. Paul*, are *appointed of God*, they are *God's Ordinance*, Rom. 13. 1, 2. And since God himself appoints them to hear our Causes; we may well presume that he will not look upon it as our sin to bring them to their Hearing. For God would never appoint an Ordinance to Minister only to Mens sins, and to put them in a way of multiplying Offences; so that since he has appointed Officers to Hear it, a *Suit at Law* in its self must needs be innocent, and capable to be carried on without any sin at all.

Nay, God has not only appointed the Magistrates Office for it: But moreover,

3. When a *Legal Determination* is given, he takes it upon himself, as if he were the *Author thereof*; which is still a farther

Eyi-

Evidence, that we do not sin, barely in seeking such a Determination of our Case.

*He takes a Legal Determination, I say, upon himself, as if he were the Author thereof. In the Jewish State, God was their Political Prince and Sovereign, and the Judges among them were as much his Deputies, and did represent his Person, as now the Judges do the Persons of their several Princes in all other Nations. And therefore Moses told them when he appointed them, that the Judgment was God's, and that they gave Sentence only as his Deputies, and Judg'd not for themselves, but for the Lord, Deut. 1. 17.*

Now, tho' other Nations cannot look upon God as their *Secular King*, and *State-Head* in all those Points which the Jews could, for he gave them *Laws in Civil Affairs*, and issued out *Directions in State Exigences*, and the like: Yet as to this they can, that *all their Governors* are but *Substitutes under him*, and that he owns what is legally, and justly Determined by them. For, the *Magistrate* he looks upon, as his *Minister and Vicegerent*, who doth all things in his Name and Stead; the *Power*, says *St. Paul*, is the *Minister of God*, Rom. 13. 4. And since he acts as his *Servant*, he takes his judi-

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judicial Determination upon himself, as if it were his own, and he were the Author of it. For this he doth plainly in *Criminal Causes*, and the Case is the same in all other *Judicial Causes* which are not *Criminal*. When any man is wrong'd, saith he, let him not *avenge himself*, for *Vengeance is mine, I will repay it*, i. e. by the Magistrate who is my avenger to *Execute Wrath*, so that when he punishes, you may look upon it as if I had done it, *Rom. 12. 19.* and *13. 4.*

And since a Legal Determination is owned by God himself as if he were the Author thereof, we may be sure, whilst all things else are right, that there is no hurt barely in our seeking to have our Cause so Determined. It can be no sin to ask what God grants, for *he hears not Sinners* in their Sins, *Joh. 9. 31.* nor can it give any Offence in a controverted Case, to appeal to his own Sentence. So that since in all Legal Determinations it is God himself, who by his Ministers passes Judgment; we may be assured, that we do not displease him in applying our selves thereto, when there is just cause for us to do so.

4. That a *Suit at Law*, and all *Judicial Process*, is not in it self a *Sin*, appears from *Courts being Erected by consent in the*



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Apostles days, for the Management and Conduct of them.

Now that such Courts were then Erected, I shall shew from two places ; one of St. Paul, wherein he prescribes them ; and another of St. James, wherein he makes mention of them.

1. It appears from one place in St. Paul, wherein he prescribes them ; and that is 1 Cor. 6. where he orders the Corinthians to appoint Courts of Judgment among themselves, that so they might have no need to expose their Religion, by impleading one another before the Heathen Tribunals. Do ye not know, says he, that the Saints shall judge the World ? And if the World shall be judg'd by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters, or

† Κριτηρίων ἐλαχίστων.

\* Ἐν κριτηρίῳ ἐχὴν βιωσικαί.

fore Unbelievers, but set some, yea, rather than Infidels,

† Ἐξ ἐκκλησιῶν.

\* Τέτρες καὶ ἑξήκοντα.

of Judgment, V. 2, 3.

unworthy of the smallest Judicatures ? If ye have Judgment of things pertaining to this Life, or if ye have recourse to \* Secular Judicatures ; go not before Unbelievers, but set some, yea, rather than Infidels, those that are least esteemed, or † set them ; I say, judge, or in the \* Church

The

Chap. 2. *men from the Communion.* 23 §

Thus doth he advise them to erect among themselves standing Courts by consent, when, by Reason of the Civil Power being in Heathens hands, they could not otherwise be supplied in their own Body with Seats of judgment.

2. It appears also from another place in St. James, wherein he makes mention of them: And that is Jam. 2. 2, 3, 4. *If there come into your As-*

*sembly, or † Synagogue* † Συναγωγη.

*a man with a Gold*

*Ring, &c. into your Assembly, i. e. your Judicial Court, where the respect of Persons here taxed, was not to be permitted.*

That the word here

rendred \* *Assembly, or*

\* Συναγωγη.

*Synagogue, signifies*

sometimes more particularly Court Assemblies, and Judicial Consistories, appears from Mat. 10. 17. where our Saviour tells his Disciples of being delivered up to Consistories, and

*scourged in their † Sy-*

† Εν ταῖς αὐτῶν

*nagogues, i. e. in their*

γωγαῖς.

*Judgment Halls. And*

*so also Mat. 22. 34.*

And that it ought to signifie such Consistories and Court Assemblies (which were then used both in Ecclesiastical and Civil

Affairs) in this place, appears both from the *thing it self*, and from several particulars here spoken of these *Assemblies*, which seem to determine it to that signification.

The *thing it self*, I say, seems to require that we understand the *Apostle* in this sense, viz. the exclusion of preference of Persons. For in these *Assemblies*, *St. James* condemns all respect of persons, and discrimination of Rich and Poor, by giving Honour according to Peoples Qualities; which was unlawful only in *Judicatures*, but is a Duty in *Conversation* and *Common Carriage*. For it is an *Apostolical Precept*, to give Honour to whom Honour is due, *Rom. 13. 7.* And those *Servants*, who have believing Masters, are forbid to withdraw any thing of their worldly Respect, as presuming upon their Spiritual Kindred; or to Honour them the less, because they are become their Brethren in being Believers, *1 Tim. 6. 2.* So that although in *Judgment-Seats*, not mens Qualities, but Causes only ought to be respected; yet in other *Assemblies*, a regard may be given to their Persons, and 'tis commendable so to do.

And several Particulars here spoken of these *Assemblies*, seem to determine his meaning to these *Court-Assemblies*. For the Of-  
fenders

senders here taxed with Respecting Persons in these Assemblies, are said to have a Footstool, which belongs to Chairs of State and Judicatures.

For so the Apostle expresses himself, ver. 3. *Ye have respect to him that wears the gay cloathing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good Place; and say to the Poor, Stand thou there, or sit under my Footstool.* And this is a probable intimation, of their Dignity and Authority in the place where they sate. For Footstools ordinarily are Appendages only of the Chairs of Great Persons, who have Power and Superiority over others, as of Princes on their Thrones, and Judges upon Tribunals.

They are said also to give Evil Judgment, i. e. to pass Sentence on the wrong side, as he is like to do who tries not Things, but Persons, and determines from By-respects, not from the merits of the Cause which is to be decided. By this respect of Persons, says he, *Ye are become Judges of Evil Thoughts, i. e. you give Evil and Perverse Judgments,* ver. 4.

They are likewise said to pass Sentence on the Poor Mans Cause, without deliberating on it, or debating it. *Ye say to the Rich, saith he, Sit thou here;*

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and to the Poor, Stand thou at a distance

† So the Greek is literally to be rendered. The words are *ἡ δὲ Δικαιοσύνη ἐν αὐτοῖς*, and ye have not disputed it among your selves, nor, are ye not partial in your selves? by way of Interrogation, as we translate it. For *ἡ* is wont to ask a Question, only when it is put first, not when it has another word before it, as *ἡ* is here. And *Δικαιοσύνη* in the Passive, signifies not ye have made a difference, or acted partially, which is expressed by the Active *Δικαιοσύνη*: but ye have not been in doubt or dispute about it, which is a signification that agrees to it ordinarily.

21. 21. Mark 11. 23. in other places.

there : † And ye are not doubtful, or debate his Cause in or \* among your selves, but are Judges of Evil Thoughts, or give perverse Judgments; for so the words are most naturally rendered, and not, as we do, are ye not partial in your selves, and Judges of Evil Thoughts? v. 3, 4. And this shews plainly, that their respect of Persons was expressed in Judicial Process, in giving rash Sentence in favour of the Rich, without ever staying to hear the Plea, or weigh the Reasons of the Poores Cause.

For so 'tis rendred, Mat. Rom. 4. 20. Jam. 1. 6. and

\* *Ἐν αὐτοῖς*.

They are said in the last place, to transgress the Law in this regarding Persons, and treating them differently according

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according to the difference of their outward State and Condition. When in this different Carriage towards Rich and Poor, ye have respect of Persons, says he, ye commit sin and are convinced of the Law, which plainly forbids such practice, as Transgressors, v. 3, 9. And this seems clearly to restrain it to their Court-Assemblies. For in Judgment there is a Law forbidding all respect of Persons, *Ye shall not respect Persons in Judgment, but ye shall hear the small as well as the great,* Deut. 1. 17. and Levit. 19. 15. But there is no Law that forbids it, yea, rather, since St. Paul enjoyns us to give Honour where Honour is due, and directs Servants to pay never the less, but rather more Reverence to their Masters, because they are Believers, and would not have

\* Confusion introduced, but Order kept up in the Church, as well as in other places, there may seem enough, not only to warrant, but to recommend it in all other Cases. Besides, what is still a farther Evidence of this point, they are said particularly to transgress the Law in bidding the Rich to sit, and the Poor to stand.

v. 3, 9. which, as a

\* Great man observes, was a thing expressly

\* Dr. Ham. Annot. in loc.

forbid by a *Canon* of the *Jews* to all who  
 fate in Judgment. For that required in  
 all *Suits* and *Judicial Tryals* betwixt *Rich*  
 and *Poor*, that either *both* should stand, or  
*both* should sit. Which is a thing, as he  
 adds, that the *Jews* observe at this day  
 in hearing Causes; for there, if one  
 presuming upon his *Quality* takes a *Seat*,  
 the *Judge* presently says to the other, *Sit*  
*thou down also*.

And thus I think it appears, that the  
*Assemblies*, which *St. James* mentions in  
 this intricate place, are *Court-Assemblies*,  
 and *Judicial Consistories*; both because, the  
*Nature of the thing* seems to require it, viz.  
 the exclusion of all *Preference* or *Respect*  
 of *Persons*, which is taxed in these Courts,  
 but is not censurable elsewhere, and also  
 because he says several things of these  
*Assemblies*, which seem to determine his  
 Discourse to *Assemblies of Judicature*. For  
 they are said to be *such Assemblies*, where-  
 in is a *Foot-stool*, the usual Appendant to  
 to *Chairs of State*, and *Seats of Judgment*;  
 wherein men were *Judges of Evil Thoughts*,  
 i. e. judged wrong, and gave perverse Sen-  
 tence; wherein they *Condemned the Poor*  
*mans Cause* without deliberating on it,  
 and debating it; wherein to respect *Per-*  
*sons*.

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sons, was forbid by a plain Law, as we find there is a very express one forbidding it in *Judicial Proceedings*, but none at all, nay, rather the contrary in all other Cases; and, lastly, such wherein to bid a Rich man sit, and a Poor man stand, was a transgression of a Precept, as in *Court-Assemblies* it was plainly, being an express Canon of the Jews in Judgment. By all which I suppose it may appear, that *Judicial Consistories* are the *Assemblies* here intended.

Thus were *Judicatures* prescribed, and ordinarily used in the Apostles Days. St. Paul appoints the *Corinthians* to erect them; and St. James makes mention of them as of an ordinary thing among them; and that too without passing any mark of dislike upon the Courts themselves, when he blames that partiality and respect of Persons which the Judges shewed therein. These *Judicatures*, indeed, were erected by their own consent among themselves; and were not imposed on them by Power and Authority, as other *Legal Tribunals* are. But they serv'd for the same end of hearing Causes, and passing such Sentence as should take effect, and put an end to Controversies, as other *Judgment-Seats* do; so that the same thing was done by them in suing in their Courts,



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which is now done by us insuing in *ours*. In our *Judgment-Halls*, 'tis true, where things are managed by Advocates, who oftentimes seek *Conquest* and not *Justice*, and ransack all Reserves of Law to support an unrighteous Cause, as long as *Craft* can do it; there is more room for ill Arts, which bring more sin into our *Pleadings*. But that is not a Fault inseparable from *Suits*, but is the sin of *Managers*; it lies not naturally upon the thing, but only upon the *Contingent circumstances* and *manner of doing*; so that if we are careful to keep it free from them, a Suit in it self may still be innocent, and carried on as lawfully in our Courts, as it was in those of the Apostles Days.

And as this Lawfulness of Judicial Process, appears from these *Legal Courts* erected to minister to it in the Apostles Days. So doth it yet farther,

5. From the Practice of our Blessed Saviours and of St. Paul, who both claimed the benefit of it, and thereby plainly warranted and authorized it.

Our Blessed Lord himself, I say, claimed the benefit of it. For when the Officer, in the High Priest's presence, struck him with the Palm of his Hand, he openly complains of the illegality of the Act.

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and expostulates before him for a redress thereof. *If I have spoken Evil, says he, testify against me, and bear witness of the Evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?* Joh. 18. 22, 23.

And after him St. Paul was not afraid to plead his own Cause, and serve himself of Law, when others went about to use him with Violence, contrary to it. For when the Chief Captain ordered him to be *scourged uncondemned*, he pleads the *Legal Priviledge of a Roman*, who ought not to be treated so, *Act. 22. 24, 25.* And when the Magistrates of *Philippi*, contrary to a Law and Priviledge, had *scourged him and Silas*, without any Hearing of their Cause; he threatens them for it, and would not put it up, unless in Compensation they would *come themselves in Person to release them out of Prison*, and do them Honour before all the Multitude, *Act. 16. 36, 37, 38, 39.* Nay, he uses all *wise Arts of Law* to maintain a *Righteous Cause*, and when he was not like to have *Justice* done him in one Court, he *protests against it*, and claims the *Benefit of Appeal to another*. For when Festus, willing to do the Jews a Pleasure, would have had him go up to be judg'd before him at Jerusalem, in the way whereto the Jews had design'd to murder him; he answered,

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*swered, I stand at Cæsar's Judgment-Seat, where I ought to be judged; if I have committed any thing worthy of Death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, as thou very well knowest the Law of the Empire is my Protection, and no Man may deliver me unto them, I Appeal unto Cæsar, Act. 25. 3, 9, 10, 11.*

And thus, from all these Considerations it appears, that a Suit at Law is not a thing unalterably evil, and *unlawful in it self*; but may very innocently be carried on, if no sin mixes with it to turn it into a Transgression. It is a thing which God has allowed when we have *just Cause* for it, and are guilty of no Vice in the *Course and Conduct* thereof. For he himself has put us into a necessity of it, and has appointed the *Magistrates Office* for it, and takes upon himself the just Judgment which is given therein; and, when Christians became a distinct Body, Courts were set up by the order of the *Apostles themselves* to Minister to Judicial Process; and, as it fell in their way, our Blessed Lord, and St. Paul too, have serv'd their own turns thereby. By all which 'tis plain, that a course of Law may sometimes be innocently used, since otherwise God and these Good Men, could never have been thus concerned about it.

But

II. Chap. 2. *men from the Communion.* 345

But against all this some may urge two places, which seem to take away all Suits among Christians, and to forbid all legal Defence, by requiring a patient sufferance of all Losses and Indignities, which should occasion them. One is, *Mat. 5. 39.* in point of *Indignities*; the other is *Mat. 5. 40.* and *1 Cor. 6. 7.* in point of *Losses and spoil of Goods.* And if both these must be suffered with *Patience*, without any Legal Defence or Righting of our selves; what is there left to be matter of Civil Causes, for us to Sue and Contend for?

These Pleas seem fair, and therefore it is fit they should have an Answer.

One Place seems to forbid all Suits and Legal Righting of our selves, in case of *Affronts and Indignities*; and that is, *Mat. 5. 38, 39.* *Yea have heard, says our Saviour, that it hath been said in the Law of Moses, an Eye for an Eye, and a Tooth for a Tooth: i. e. When any one had offered these Violences to them, they were allowed by judicial Process (this Law of Retaliation being directed to the Judges, Exod. 21. 23, 24.) to inflict the very same on them again. But in opposition to this, I say unto you, resist not Evil, or the Evil*  
† Man, not only forcibly by Private Violence,

† Τῷ πονηρῷ.

but

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to serve our selves of Law, when we are brought before Tribunals. For this our Blessed Lord himself did, as we have seen when the Officer struck him before the High-Priest; he offers not himself for another blow, but argues against the illegality of what he had received already, Job. 18. 22, 23. And this St. Paul did, when the Chief Captain would have scourged him uncondemned; he pleads the priviledg of a Roman, which ought to secure him from being so hardly treated, Acts 22. 25. And this he did again, when Festus would have sent him to Jerusalem to be Tryed; he appeals to Caesar, and claims the Benefit of his Judgment-Seat, where he ought to be Judged, Acts 25. 9, 10, 11. They did not invite fresh injuries, by laying themselves open to them; but stood upon their own Defence, and Legally withstood them. So that these Precepts, are not to be taken in the Literal Compass, (in which sense St. Paul, yea, and Christ himself too, would have been Transgressors,) nor so as to forbid us to serve our selves of Law at any time when we are brought before Tribunals: since St. Paul, who very well understood them, nay, our Blessed Lord, who to the height fulfilled them, have

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† *Ἀντιστάς.*

\* *as, Jer. 49. 19.*  
who will appoint  
me the time, or  
*as it is rendred in*  
*the Margin,* con-  
vent me to plead;  
*which the LXX e-*  
*press by* *Τίς ἀντι-*  
*στάς μοι*; And  
so again, Chap. 50.

44.

Verse 40. *If any Man will Sue thee at the*  
*Law, and take away thy*

\* *χιτών.*

*Coat* or \* *inner Gar-*  
*ment*; rather than con-  
tend with him for that, hazard a further  
Loss, and let him take thy

† *ἱμάτιον.*

† *Cloak* or upper Gar-  
ment also. Conformable

whereto the Apostle tells the *Corinthians*  
that they are utterly in a fault, in not suf-  
fering themselves to be Defrauded, but seek-  
ing Remedy by a Suit, or going to Law at  
all, 1 Cor. 6. 7.

Now in Answer to these places, I  
observe.

1. That they are not meant literally, and  
absolutely, of turning the Cheek to all Smi-  
ters, or yielding our Goods to all ravenous  
Incroachers; nor forbid us at any time

have taught and authoriz'd us by their Example to serve our selves thereof.

Nay, they do not forbid us in all Cases to bring others before Magistrates, and seek unto Judicatories so Right our selves. For St. Paul did something towards this, in his Contest with the *Philippian Magistrates*. Where, though he was an Offender against the Laws, yet in regard they had treated him illegally, in scourging him and *Silas* uncondemned, against the Priviledge of *Romans*, he terrifies them with their illegal Proceedings, and would not put it up, till they Compounded with him upon his own Terms, and brought him honourably out of Prison in the Eyes of all the Citizens, *Acts* 16. 36, 37, 38, 39. Besides, as I have already shewn, that this seeking to Judicatures is sometimes lawful among Christians, is evident from the *Law-Courts* in the *Apostles Days*, which were prescribed by the Apostles themselves for this very purpose. It is clear, from its own necessity, since there is no living in this World for honest and Conscientious Men without it. From God's having appointed an Officer on purpose, the Magistrate I mean, to take care of it; and from

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from his taking a *just Law Determination* upon himself, as if he were the *Author* thereof. So that *some seeking unto Courts,* and judicial endeavours to *Right our selves,* are still *innocent*; and therefore all cannot be here *prohibited*.

As for these Places then, they are not meant *Literally* and *Absolutely* of turning our *Check to all Smiters,* or of yielding our *Goods to all ravenous Encroachers*: They do not forbid us at *any time* to serve our selves of *Law* when others *unjustly implead us*; not at *all times* to *seek unto Magistrates,* and *implead others*.

But,

2. They are meant *Proverbially,* and only forbid *MOVING Suits in Lighter Losses,* and *Indignities,* such as our Lord there mentions; or making *Law the Minister of Revenge* in any others which are of more importance.

They require *Patience,* and forbid *MOVING Suits in Lighter Losses and Indignities.* To turn the *Cheek to a Smiter,* is a *Proverbial Speech,* which denotes our *calm endurance and patient bearing of injuries.* And so the *Afflicted Mans Patient carriage* is expressed, *Lam. 3.— he giveth his Cheek to him that smiteth him, v. 30.* And to let him that *Sues for the Coat,* i. e. the  
\* *Shirt*



\* *Xřāva.*\* Shirt or inner Garment, *take the Cloak also,* is a *Proverbial Phrase*

too, (for in the truth of the Letter, a Shirt is no likely matter of a Law-Suit,) and signifies an *uncontesting sufferance* of such small Losses, tho that may expose us to bear some others, and those more weighty ones. So that when our Saviour bids us give the other Cheek to the Smiter, and the upper Garment to him that has taken away the inner, i. e. to venture the inviting him to a second injury by his success, rather than to ingage in variance: His meaning is, that in these, or such other light injuries, which either leave no permanent effect, or only such as may be born without any great prejudice, we should exercise our *Patience*, and not go to Law, either to recompence the past, or to prevent future sufferings. And therefore if in these smaller matters we enter Actions, and implead others, that indeed is our Sin; since here he enjoyns us *Charitably* and *Patiently* to bear them, and not to commence Suits for them; as I shall shew more fully hereafter in its proper Place.

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And as they forbid all Suits in these smaller matters; so do they all Malice, and making the Law the instrument of Revenge in any others which are of more importance. We have heard, saith our Saviour, that it hath been said an Eye for an Eye, and a Tooth for a Tooth, i. e. they who had suffered evil, were allowed in course of Law to return it, when as in these instances mentioned, they had no other benefit thereby, but only the pleasure of seeing him smart who had occasioned their sufferings; which is properly Revenging the injury they had received, for to Revenge an injury, is in hatred to return it. But in opposition to this, I say unto you, (so that Revenge being the thing there allowed, it must also in this opposition be the thing here prohibited) resist not evil, i. e. in any kind of Resistance, which is Revenging it as they might: But whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other, &c. i. e. Be readier to suffer another injury, than spitefully to commence a Suit, or in any sort to Revenge that which is received already, v. 38, 39, 40.

As for this place in St. Matthew then it forbids us not to defend our selves by Law in any case, nor in all cases, to bring an action, and implead others. But it only

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ly forbids suits in *lighter Losses* and *Indignities*, such as our Lord there mentions, and making the Law the *instrument of Revenge in weightier matters.*

And the same is to be said of that Passage of *St. Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 6. where after having taxed both the sin and scandal of impleading each other before unbelievers, he adds moreover, *Now there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to Law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not suffer yourselves to be defrauded?* v. 7. In which words the Apostle doth not speak as a Publisher of a new Law, but only as a Teacher and Monitor of what his Lord and Master had taught before. And the words are not to be taken in their utmost Latitude, more then the fore-mentioned words of our Blessed Saviour were, or made to forbid this way of Legal Defence of one Christian against another, universally and in all Cases: But they are to be restrained to little Causes, as a Prohibition against Litigiousness, or running to Law, as the *Corinthians* then were wont to do, for light and tolerable injuries.

This

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This littleness of their causes, he taxes,  
v. 2. *If the World shall be judged by you,*  
*are ye unworthy to judge the smallest mat-*  
*ters?* or, according to the more lite-  
ral rendring, \* in the  
*smallest Judicatures, i. e.*

\* Κριτηρίων ἐλα-  
χίστων.

in Courts set up for  
hearing or determining small causes?  
And he refers to it again I conceive,  
v. 4. when he sends them for Arbitrati-  
ons and Decisions of the Differences then  
current among them, to those who are  
least esteemed in the Church, i. e. to those  
of the least Note, not in the Rank of  
Christians, but \* in the

Rank of Judges, or to  
such inferiour Courts,

\* See Dr. Lightf.  
Hor. Heb. in loc.

or Arbitrators, as sate  
to hear and decide the lowest or slight-  
est matters. And indeed these *Corinthi-*  
*ans*, whose Law Suits he here condemns  
seem at that time to have been very li-  
tigious, and apt to quarrel or go to  
Law on small and slender pretences. The  
Apostle taxes them for their Contenti-  
ousness in his *two Epistles* to them. And in  
this place he reproves them, as Persons  
who were ready to make use of Law,  
not only to redress injuries, but also  
to commit them, and who were neither  
willing to do right nor to take wrong.

Instead

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Instead of *suffering your selves to be defrauded*, saith he, *ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your Brethren* v. 8. so that among those Persons, going to Law was utterly a fault, being ordinarily on such accounts, as were too light for the hearing of Courts or Umpires, and should have exercised their Christian Charity and Patience.

Indeed, if we take away Suits for tolerable injuries, and for gratification of Angry Passions, we should cut off the greatest part of those causes which are wont to trouble Courts, and to divide Neighbourhoods; and the ordinary state of Christians, would be a state of Peace and Patience, and Suits would become rare things among them. And this restraint and Inhibition of Suits at Law, viz. the Prohibition of going to Law ordinarily, by the usual Latitude of speech in moral Rules and Maxims, which are uttered indefinitely, though they be intended only for the most part, may be call'd by an indefinite speech, *not going to Law*, as St. Paul calls it in this place, or *not resisting evil*, as our Blessed Lord was pleased to express himself when he spake thereof.

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And in this sense it might be said of the Primitive Christians, as *Athenagoras* doth, that † *when their goods were taken away by violence, they did not go to Law for redress, because they did not do*

† Γασόμενοι μὴ ἀνίστασθαι, ἀρπαζέμενοι μὴ δι-  
κάζεσθαι. *Athenag. Legat, p. 12.*

it for any tolerable injuries, which made up the Number of Actions that troubled the Courts, and were the Common Causes of Suits to others. Besides which, the greatest part of the violences they fell under, were losses for their Religion, which the Heathens took occasion to offer and put upon them, because they were under a general odium, and instead of punishing, the Magistrates might be willing to connive or sometimes to encourage what was done against them; which sufferings coming on them for his Cause, and with such countenance both from Courts and Rulers, they did not seek to redress them by Law, but bore them with patience, and trusted to God for their recompence.

As

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As for these places then, which seem to forbid Suits, either on *Losses* or *Indignities*, they do not forbid them *absolutely*, and in *all* Cases. They only forbid us to fly to them in *smaller* matters, such as our Saviour mentions; or to make them a *means of Revenge* in *Great ones*. So that there is still room left for *Suits at Law* in case of greater injuries. Which, although all good men may, and will several times put up, without seeking a Legal Redress, when by such Patient sufferance they can serve the purposes of Piety and Prudence: yet, when the Assertion, or Prosecution of their own just rights therein, is of considerable account to themselves or their Families, or is fit and requisite for wise and good Ends; they may safely call in the help of Law to indemnifie themselves, and seek to Courts without any offence to God, or wrong to a good Conscience.

And thus it appears, that Suits at Law are not *sinful in themselves*, but may lawfully be used if there is no unlawfulness in the *Ground*, and *way of management*. The thing it self has no sin in it, and so may be innocent, if we take care that no other sin doth adhere to it. So that barely to try a Title is no matter of

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of any man's account, nor has any offence in it all.

But although Suits at Law are not thus unlawful in themselves, but may sometimes be innocent: Yet as I said,

2. They are our sin, and a matter of our account, when they are either enter'd upon an unjustifiable Ground, or are carried on by a sinful Management.

1. I say, Suits at Law are our sin, and a matter of our account, when they are begun upon an unjustifiable Ground.

It is not every cause that usually begets it, which can warrant and justify a Law-Suit before God. For sometimes men are led on to it only by Revenge, when they have no lasting Damage to be repaired, but seek only their Brothers smart, and to be even with him who occasioned theirs: And then the Suit must needs be unlawful, having a sin at the bottom of it. And at other times, when there is a real Damage, yet it is so trivial, as that the making of it up will not countervail the Evils and Temptations of a Suit: and then it will be sinful still, as wanting a Ground of so much weight, as can bear the burthen of it. For a Tryal at Law, besides its being a costly and painful thing, is also a very perillous State, and a dangerous Temptation. It will be  
Q sure



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sure to put the Person whom we sue, to much trouble and pains, in Collecting and Examining Evidences, preparing Witnesses, informing Advocates, and attending Courts, which is toyl in it self, and an hindrance to better business: and in the whole Course and Conduct of it, it will put him to constant Charges and Expence. And it will be a State of great Temptation, both to him and to our selves, insnaring us, unless we are very circumspect to prevent the same, into covetous Wishes, or delays of Justice, or vexatious Arts, or uncharitable Surmises, and revengeful Thoughts, or deceitful Suggestions and Falsifications, Hypocritically disguising the weakness of our own Cause, or unreasonably aggravating the Flaws of our Adversaries to our own profit and his prejudice, and the like. These sins are ever before men whilst a Suit is depending; they have constant opportunities for them, and are perpetually provoked to them; and it must be a great Conduct and Proof, both of their Skill and Care, that must preserve them from being intangled and ingaged in them. And since there is so much Toyl attending a Law Suit, so great Charge occasion'd by it, and so many Temptations and great Dangers, both to our own Souls, and our Brothers, laid in the way thereof; it must not be

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a light thing, but a weighty Cause indeed, which can over-balance all these Considerations, and justly draw us to commence it.

But in this point to be more Particular, Suits are *unlawfully* entred, when they are begun, either,

1. For *Revenge*, and not for *Reparation of Damages*.

Or,

2. When for *Reparation* only of small things, which cannot countervail the evil and hazard of a Suit, but ought to exercise our *Patience* and *Forgiveness*, and so be put up without recourse to *Judicatures*.

1<sup>st</sup>. I say, Suits are *unlawfully* entred, when they are *Vindictive*, not *Reparative*, and are begun only for *Revenge*, not for *Reparation of Damages*. And this they always are, when they are commenced either against *insolvent Persons*; or upon such words and actions against others, for which, besides *Costs*, no *Damages* that are *valuable* are like to be allowed us.

They are not *Reparative*, but *Vindictive*, when they are commenced against *insolvent Persons*. When we sue a *Poor Man*, who cannot pay what he owes, or recompence the wrongs which he has done us, it is not that our own Sore may be heal'd, but only that his Smart may

be wrought by the Legal Process. For the Law doth not make him Coin-money who has it not, but only forces him to pay it, who has it, but will not part with it. To put a *Beggar* in Prison, and run him out at Law to the utmost, is not the way to put Money in his Pocket; so that when we have to do with such a Person, it is only Revenge upon him, and not the Compensation of our Loss, which we can propose to our selves thereby. If we go to Right our selves by the Law then upon an insolvent man, we go only to return the hurt which he has done, and to be even with him. And this is a great instance of an *hard Heart*, and a *spiteful Spirit*; and is quite contrary to that *Brotherly kindness, Compassion, and Forgiveness*, which, how *unworthy* soever he may be of it, yet, so long as the *misery* of his *case* requires it, God has enjoyn'd us to use towards him. It is exactly to deal with him, as the *wicked man* did with his *insolvent Brother* in the *Parable*, which provoked God to return the same Rigor upon his own head again. For when he bought his Lord ten thousand Talents, he freely forgave him that great Debt, because he was not able to pay it. But when his Fellow-Servant, who bought him only an hundred

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*dred Pence, could not tender down that small sum when he demanded the same, he shew'd nothing of that Compassion towards this poor Man which God had shewn towards him, but laid hands on him & cast him into Prison till payment should be made. But when the Fellow Servants told this to their Lord, he resolves to deal with him in his own way, and strictly exacts that Debt, which otherwise he intended freely to have acquitted, delivering him, as he had done his Brother, to the Tormentors, till all should be discharged. And so likewise shall my Heavenly Father do to you, says our Saviour, if ye from your Hearts forgive not every one his Brother their Trespases, Mat. 18. v. 24, to c. 19.*

And what I have here said of insolvent Persons, has place likewise more or less, according to the degree of their necessity and of our ability, in others whom we are obliged in Charity to spare. A Good Christian must be a Charitable person, who must avoid doing, not only an unjust, but also a Rigorous and hard thing. And in Righting of himself, he must consider, not only what satisfies his own just claims from others, but also what suits with his Ability and Christian Obligation of shewing Compassion towards them. And therefore

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in Legal Seifures and Righting himself on those, who, tho' not perfectly insolvent, are yet very necessitous, a good Man will not be hasty in going to extremities; nor, when he doth, will he take all away from them, and neither leave them Cloaths to wear, nor a Bed to lie on. He will deal with them, with moderation and tenderness, and have a due Regard to the supply of their needs, as well as to the satisfaction of his own Claims. Being put to Right himself upon the needy, he will look upon it as a Call from God to Charity, and make Compassionate abatements, more or less, according as he has more or less of that noble disposition which in tenderness for others, as St. Paul \* says, seeks  
 1 Cor. 13. 5. not her own, and according as his own ability, and the Degree of their necessity may require.

But if they are commenced against responsible Persons, they are not *Reparative* but *Vindictive* still, if they are upon such words or actions; for which besides Costs, no Damages that are valuable are like to be allowed us. A great number of Suits, are for abusive Words, or a Box on the Ear, or other trivial matters, which leave

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leave no *Permanent ill effects*, but if our *Passions* may be with-held from estimating them, pass off without making us the worse, or doing us any *Prejudice*. And in all these, since there is no *Damage* that sticks to us, there is no need of any *Reparations*. So that if we begin *Suits*, it is not to *indemnify our selves*, but to be vexations, and afflict others who have afflicted us, wherein consists the very *Nature of Revenge*.

And this is always *unlawful*, and most expressly forbidden to all us *Christians*; To the *Jews*, indeed, it was allowed in the *Old Testament*. For they were permitted to return ill for ill, and to demand an *Eye for an Eye*, and a *Tooth for a Tooth*, when thereby their own lost Member was not restored, but only their *Adversaries* was sent after it, and, bating the pleasure of *Revenge*, they reaped no other benefit by it, *Mat. 5. 38.* But this is most strictly forbidden to all us *Christians* in the *New Testament*. For we are taught to recompence to no man *Evil for Evil*, but to overcome *Evil with Good*, *Rom. 12. 17, 20, 21.*—to forgive those that *Trespass against us*, i. e. not to return their injurious, or hard usage, as ever we expect forgiveness of our own *Trespases at God's hands* *Mat. 6. 12, 14, 15.* And particularly in oppo-

sition to this going to *Law for Revenge*, our Saviour forbids us *Judicially* to resist the *Evil Man*, as has been shewn, i. e. in course of Law to return the Evil on him, as by Vertue of that Rule, *an Eye for an Eye*, &c. the Jews did : but, instead of that, by the Phrase of turning *one Cheek to him who has struck the other*, he requires that we patiently submit, and sit down under it, *Mat. 5. 38, 39, 40.*

This then is the *first* thing, which God requires to the Lawfullness of all Judicial Tryals, viz. they must never be *Vindictive* but *Reparative*, and we must not Sue another in order to his *Smart and Prejudice*, but only to *heal*, or *secure our own selves*, either by holding the Goods which he *claims* from us, or by *repairing the Loss*, which he has occasioned to us.

2. Suits for *Reparation of Losses* are unlawful, when the Reparations are only of *small things*, which cannot countervail the evils and hazards of a Suit, but ought to exercise our *Patience and Forgiveness*, and so be quietly put up without Recourse thereto.

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In the Course of *Secular Wisdom*, indeed; which looks only to secure the Concerns of *this World*, when men are Rich or Potent, and have Wealth and interest enough to go thro' therewith, the *smallest Affronts* or *infringement* of their just Power and Priviledge; are often-times esteemed a sufficient occasion of a *Law-Suit*. For thereby they think they stop the *first Breach* in their own Right, which, if it be suffered to be once made, as it is in the Breach of a *Water-Bank*, or a *fortified Wall*, 'tis after that a much easier thing to widen it. They check an *incroaching humour* in the bud, before it has got Heart, or Ground enough to make a greater Contest. And they shew the World that they are not of a *yielding Temper*, which will be *wrong'd* or *baffled*; and thereby strike an awe, which will keep all others from attempting them, and purchase thir own quiet. Upon these, or such like *secular Maxims*, when nothing but the interest of this World guides men, they many times conclude that the slightest wrongs are not to be put up; and therefore, when in any trivial thing their Right is invaded, they betake themselves to course of Law for Maintenance and Vindication thereof.



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But in *Religion* the Case is alter'd. For that seek not only what is fit to *secure* our selves, and maintain our *worldly Rights*; but what is fit to maintain an *Universal innocence*, and to shew *Charity* towards others. Its main work lies in lessening the Love of this World, and making us easie to part with any injoyment of this Life, when it becomes inconsistent with any Duty, and indangers our Passage to a better. And therefore although *secular wisdom* would, perhaps, sometimes advise us; yet will *true Religion* altogether forbid us to go to *Law* for *trivial Losses*. For a Suit at Law, as I have noted, will put our *Adversary* to great *Cost* and *Pain*; and since in Christianity he is our *Neighbour* and our *Brother*, this we ought not to do for little things, whereby we shall not gain near so much as he loses; for

this is not according to the \* Commandment, \*  
 \* Mat. 22. 39. Love him as our selves.

Nay, it will be a great *snare*, both to his *Virtue* and *ours*; for although it be no state of *direct sin*, yet it is a state of very *dangerous Temptation*, there being so many ways to offend while a Suit is carrying on, and it being so very hard to avoid them without great *Conduct* and *Circumspection*. And this also we ought

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not lightly to cast, either in the way of our own Souls, or of our Brothers. Yea, we shall not do it, if we have any of that tender Love and Care for Souls, which Christ has shew'd, and which he requires us to shew, when, upon a prospect of saving them, he commands us, not only to bear a Reproach, or to part with our Substance, but even to lay down our own lives for others, 1 Joh. 3. 16.

Thus, when the Damages to be repaired are but of small account, and the trouble and charges of the suit will take much more from him, than we are like to get by it: out of our tender care of all Persons, whom God commands us to Love as we do our selves; and out of our Love to each others Souls, and a desire to keep, both our selves and them from dangerous Temptations, which would rob us of our Innocence, (a thing that ought not to be hazarded for trifling Regards;) we ought patiently to bear the Loss, and not seek out by Law to redress it. And this, as I have intimated, is what our Saviour has expressly commanded, *Mat. 5. If one smite thee on the right Cheek, which is a tolerable affront, turn to him the other also, or expose thy self to be smitten again, rather than resist it judicially. And if any man sue thee at the Law, to take away thy*

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*thy Coat, or inner Garment, a thing that*  
*may easily be spared; hazard an higher*  
*Loss, and let him take thy Cloak also, ra-*  
*ther than sue to regain it, v. 38, 39, 40.*  
So that rather than sue to recover little  
matters, and enter Actions for small Re-  
parations; we must be content to want  
them, and sit down without any Repairs  
at all.

And in rating when things are thus  
*little and frivolous*, we must not judge by  
our own *Pride* and *Passions*, which count  
nothing little, but aggrandize every af-  
front or injury that is done to our own  
selves: but, by the *reality of things*, and  
according as we *our selves* should judge  
were we *humble and dispassionate*, or as  
they would be judg'd of by other *Holy*  
and *Indifferent Persons*. Our own *Pride*,  
and the *Opinions of the World* would whis-  
per to us, that every *Trespass against us* is  
*intolerable*, and deserves a *Process*; every  
*imputation of a Lye, a Stab*; and every  
*actionable Affront*, a *Suit* at least, if not a  
*Challenge*. But *Pride*, and *Passion*, and  
the *Opinions of the World*, must not be our  
Counsellors: For we renounced them at  
our *Baptism*, when we were first made  
Christians; and if we would please God,  
they must not sway us, but ought daily  
to be *mortified and subdued* in us. And  
since

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since they are so much our Sin, and so directly against our *Baptismal Vow* and *Profession*: we must not think to excuse our selves for going to Law on *little Losses* and *Indignities* by saying they seemed great according to their representation of them. In judging then what are *little things*, we must not be governed by our own *Pride* and *Passions*, but by the *reality of things*, and the Judgments of *dispassionate, humble Persons*. And this our Lord plainly shews, by setting down a *Box on the Ear*, (which in reality doth no hurt, nor leaves any permanent effect behind it) among those *light Indignities* which ought not to be a matter of a Suit, though every where the *Pride* and *Passions* of men, and particularly at that time the *haughtiness of the Jews*, thought it a great thing, which ought by all means to have satisfaction made for it. For this, as a † Learned man observes, was their Rule about it. *Doth any Person give his Neighbour a Box on the Ear? let him give him a Shilling, yea, says Rabbi Judah, a Pound; or if it were upon the Cheek, let him give him 200 † Zuzes to make amends for it.* Nay, if he give him a

† Dr. Lightf.  
Hor. Heb. in Mat.  
5. 39.

† i. e. in English coin, 6 l. 5 s.

nother

another Box, he ought to give him 400 in recompence it. So great did they think the Indignity to a Jewish man, esteeming all their own Nation, as he observes from Maimonides, even those of the most beggarly condition, to be Gentlemen, because they were all the Children of Abraham.

And thus it appears when a Suit is unlawful upon this first account, viz. its entering upon an unjustifiable Ground. For such it is in all Cases, when we bring an Action only for Revenge, and not for Reparation of Damages: or when for the Reparation of such small things, as ought not to expose us to all the Evils and Temptations of a judicial Process, but to Exercise our Patience and Forgiveness; which smallness of things is to be rated, not by mens Pride and Passions, which esteem no ill small that is done to themselves, but by the reality of things, and the Judgment of Humble and Dispassionate persons.

And this holds true, not only in Losses and Indignities offered to our selves; but also in the Case of Trust, when they are offered to others who are committed to our Care and Guardianship. For when Suits are Sinful, as we have seen they are in the Case of Revenge, and of lighter affronts and injuries, which Christ Commands us not to redress by Law, but to bear

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bear with Patience: I see no difference, but an *equal unlawfulness*, whether we Sue upon our *own*, or upon their Accounts. For surely our taking of a *Trust*, doth not ingage us to *Disobey* our Lord, or do any *evil* thing; but only to do all that for our charge which we can do for them, as *Good Christians* and *Honest Men*. And therefore in *lighrer* matters when Suits are *sinful*, we may no more Sue for them, than we can tell a *Lie*, or *Swear* an unlawful *Oath*, or *Over-reach* in their Cause, or be guilty of any other *Transgression*. If they were come up to Act in *their own Name*, in these Cases a *Judicial Tryal* would not be *lawful*, but a *sin* in them: And where they themselves could not Sue, we must not think that we, who act only as their *Proxies* and *Representatives*, may do it for them. If these Losses and Indignities, which are shewed to them, were offered to *our selves*, we ought not to commence an *Action*, but to be patient under them; and they have no reason in the World to think us wanting either in our *Trust*, or *Friendship*, when we do all that to the utmost in *their Case*, which we durst do in *our own*.

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So far then as Suits are *sinful*, and the putting up injuries without entering Actions for Reparation thereof is a *strict Duty*, as it plainly is in case of *lighter Losses* and *Indignities*; it equally obliges us in *Trust* for others, as in our *own Business*. Where 'tis no *Duty*, indeed, and where a Suit is not a *Sin*, tho' forbearance might shew a greater height of Christian Patience and Perfection, as it is sometimes in the Case of *greater injuries*, there is a Difference; and tho' it were commendable still to refrain in our *own Case*, yet 'tis not in *theirs*. In the former Instances, to forbear is a *necessary* point, having an expresse Precept for it; and necessary things may be done for them by those who represent them, without their *own* consent and approbation. But in these Cases where 'tis no sin, to forbear is no *necessary Duty*, but a *voluntary act*: and it is no part of our Trust to perform voluntary heights, and unrequired Generosities at their cost; but if these be done, they must be left to themselves, when, by making it a matter of their *own choice*, they themselves may have the *Virtue*, and the *Reward* of it. So far then, as the putting up an injury without a Suit is no *Strict Duty*, but only a *Free-will Offering*, and a *Voluntary Act*, it must

must not be done in *their* Case; tho' it were much to be commended in our own. But when Patience is a Duty, and Suits are *sinful*, whether it be *their* concern or *ours* it matters not, for *both* are *equal*. We must be *faithful* to our Lord, and observe the Duties of *Patience*, *Peace*, *Forgiveness*, and all other Laws of God, in acting for *others* as well as for *our selves*. So that when there is no justifiable Ground of Suit, we must abstain from it, whether it be for *Publick* or *Private* ends, whether it be only our *Charge*, or *we* our selves that are concerned therein. And this I have noted for the use of those, who, I think, are much out in this point. For there are several, who *would*, or at least *pretend they would* bear much in their own *Business*, who will bear nothing at all, and yet think they are not *litigious*, in commencing Suits for every trifle, when they are in *Trust* for others.

But as some Suits are thus *unlawful*, because they are upon an *unjustifiable* Ground; so, when the *Grounds* are good, are others *unlawful*.

2. Because they are carried on by a *sinful* management.



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A Suit at Law is a very dangerous *State* and has strong *Temptations* to several *Sins* accompanying it. And if, when there is just Cause for it, any of these are incurr'd in the *management* thereof, it is our *Sin* still, and we shall be put to answer for it.

To shew what these are, and when Suits are unlawful upon this account, observe, that when we have an action against any Man, we must for all that look upon him as our *Neighbour*, and love him as our *selfes*, paying him all the *Justice*, *Peace*, and *Charity*, which are due to all Persons. And this is hard to do, when Men pursue any *controversies* wherein their interest is concerned; especially when they are *Publick* and, if they do not succeed, the Eyes of the World look on to see them wronged, as it is in *Law-Suits*. For then *Conquest* is the end which is ordinarily fought, and in prosecution of that Men's *Passions* generally are engaged; and these are opposite to the *Love* of others and seek only to please our *selfes*, and push us on to transgress this great Law of *Charity* in several instances. When *Conquest* is the end, there is much *Emulation* and *Strife* to gain it; and when

Envy, or Emulation

† and Strife is, faith St. † Zſa. 6.

James, there is confusion

and every evil work, Jam. 3. 16. And where *Passion* is high, and *Anger* is once moved, there a *Law of Love* is not like to be observed; for, as the same Apostle says, the *Wrath of Man* worketh not the *Righteousness of God*, Jam. 1. 20. And since *Law-Suits* generally have both these attending them, they do too often lead the *Litigants*, God knows, into many breaches of *Justice*, *Peace*, and *Charity* towards each other, particularly into these following.

If their Cause is *bad*, they use *delays* to tire out their Adversaries; they feign *Pleas* to gain time for themselves, and insist upon *Punctilio's* in his Proceedings, wholly foreign to the *merits* of the Cause, to make him begin all afresh, and hunt out all *Reserves of Law* to prolong the *Suit*, and suspend the Sentence. And this, besides its being most opposite to *Love* and *Brotherly-kindness*, and being a course most *uncharitable* and *vexatious*, is also a most *unjust* thing, being a doing *wrong* as far as in them lies, and endeavouring, what they can, to put an hindrance and stop to *Justice*.

And

And whether it be *good* or *bad*, they generally incur many *Sins* in pursuing their Cause, and fall into sundry instances of *Injustice* and *Uncharitableness* to succeed in the same.

They have a *longing desire* to overcome, and to have the *Verdict* pass for them, be it *right* or *wrong*; which is *coveting other Mens Goods*, against the Law of the Tenth Commandment, *Exod. 20. 17.* And this disposes them to *Judge* all in *Favor* of their *own Right*, and to *fret* and *murmur* when they have lost the *Verdict*, and to *suspect* (if not *complain*) of *Injustice* in the *Judge* and *Jury*, who were concerned therein; against the plain *Duty of Patience*, *Reverence* to *Governours*, and *meek submission* under *Judgment*.

They watch their opportunity to take *Advantage* of their *Adversaries* over-sight, or to bring the *Trial* on at a time when he doth not expect it, or is *unprepared* for it: which is not only against the great Law of *Charity*, that, as *St. Paul* saith, *seeks not her own* at other Mens hurt, *1 Cor. 13. 5.* but also against *Justice*, which forbids defrauding or going beyond our Brother in any matter, when we can *Over-reach* and *Out-wit* him in the same, *1 Thess. 4. 6.*

They suggest *False Pleas*, or supply Circumstances out of their own Heads in favour of their own Cause, and, when a little more would do it, stretch beyond the Truth to help out an Evidence, and make the matter full to serve their purpose; which is clearly against the Duty of *Simplicity*, and *speaking the plain truth with our Neighbour*.

They have an *inward hatred* against their Adversaries, which makes them envious at any good, and glad of any ill that doth befall them, especially in the process of the Cause, and which renders them apt to *surmise ill things* of them, and *defame* them as often as they can find a fit occasion so to do, and to catch all opportunities of being *Revenge* upon them, and to burst out into *anger and exasperating Carriage, Strife, and Variance, Clamour and bitter Words* against them, upon any the least Provocation. All which are directly contrary to the Great Duty of Love and Charity,

which † *rejoyces with them*  
 † *do rejoyce, and weeps*  
 † *with them that weep; which*  
 † *suffers long and is kind,*  
 † *thinketh no Evil,*  
 † *renders Good for*  
 † *evil; which \* puts away*

† Rom. 12. 15.

\* 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5.

† Rom. 12. 17, 21.

\* Eph. 4. 31.

all

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all Bitterness, and Wrath, and Anger, and  
Clamour, and Evil-speaking, with all Malice,

and engages us so far  
† Rom. 12. 18. 'tis † possible, and as much  
as in us lies, to live peace-  
ably with all Men.

Lastly, They love to be vexatious, and  
cut out work for their Adversaries, defer-  
ring a Tryal several Terms for no other  
end, but to make them throw away both  
their Money and Pains in attending to  
prevent a Surprise; or putting them  
to prove needless things, which influ-  
ence not the merits of the Cause; or  
insisting on every fetch of Law, that  
may be an hindrance in their way,  
though 'tis no way necessary to the main  
business; or studying other mischievous  
Arts of creating them trouble, and  
being vexatious; which is absolutely  
against the loving of our Neighbour  
our selves, and having a Brotherly-kind-  
ness, and † doing Good

† Gal. 6. 10. we have opportunity to  
Persons; and is that very

sin which St. Paul mentions and which  
expresses by wickedness

\* Πονηρία ὅσα  
παρασκευῆς εἰς  
τὸ πᾶν ὅτι τὸ πό-  
νηρον γινώμεν,  
Suid.

mischievousness, i. e. a  
dying to do mischief, and  
make \* work for others  
Rom. 1. 29.

Th

Thus, to mention no more, are all these Prolongations of Suits, and delays of Justice, these Covetous Desires and Acts of Impatience, these Arts of Circumvention and going beyond our Adversaries, these deceitful Suggestions and Falsifications in Pleadings, these mischievous and vexatious ways, this Hatred, Envy, Evil-speakings and Surmises, Anger, Bitterness, Strife, Clamour, Revenge, &c. which are so ordinarily the Concomitants of Judicial Causes, most unlawful and forbidden things; so that whensoever we have any Suits depending, we sin in them, if any of these do intrude and mix therewith. A Judicial Controversie that is begun upon a justifiable Ground, will not be innocent if 'tis carried on by so unjustifiable a management. And therefore to clear our Consciences in all Legal Tryals, we must take care, not only that, after all other means of righting our selves have fail'd, the Suit be commenced for a thing of weight, which is a justifiable Ground; but also that it be pursued in ways of all this Justice, Charity, and Peace, which makes a justifiable management. For 'tis not enough that the Cause be good, unless the manner of maintaining it be good too.

This,

This, I must confess, is an hard point, because in managing a Suit we are in the way of so many sins, and meet at every turn with strong Temptations, which must needs very much endanger us. For, all the way these sins lie before us; so that unless we have a constant care, we shall step into them. They generally serve our ends, and set on the cause; so that we are still under a Temptation to them. And, what thro' our own Interest, and desire of Conquest, what thro' the opposition which is made, unless we are very Circumspect, our Passions will be engaged; and then, more or less, we shall be hurried into the Commission of them. So that if no Suit be innocent where the Ground is good, except all these sins be avoided in the management; it will be a very hard thing, may some say, to sue innocently, and appeal to Courts at all.

This, indeed, is very true, and I am ready to confess so too. For though some *even temper'd* men, who are endow'd not only with great *goodness*, but also with great *Discretion* and *Government* of themselves, may do it with some ease, and not find it *very difficult*; yet are those men very few in Number, who are

III.  
Chap. 4. *men from the Communion.* 381

are so well set out, and qualified for an irreprehensible management of Law Suits. But ordinarily it is a very difficult task, and there is great danger of offending God attending the same. For I think there is hardly any thing, that shews more the *Conduct* and *Goodness* of a man, than to be able to keep innocent whilst he is put upon contending, and so to manage a *Suit*, or other *Contest*, as that his own Conscience shall have no cause to *accuse* or *condemn* him for it when he has done. But then the effect of this can be nothing else, but that men be very *slow* in coming to a *Suit at Law*; and very *Circumspect* in all they do, when in a thing of weight, after other Means have been tryed in vain, they cannot avoid it. It must make them *slow* in coming to it, I say. And this, besides its quitting them of the *hazard*, will, I believe, make also for their *ease*: for they will generally find less difficulty in *bearing their Loss*, than in *keeping themselves innocent*, whilst they seek *Judicially* to *repair* it. But when the thing is of so great weight, that a *Suit* cannot well be avoided; it must make them very *Circumspect* and *Watchful* over themselves all the time it is going on, lest they incur any of  
R these



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these sins in pursuit thereof. The greatness of their Care must answer to the greatness of the Danger, so that they must resolve to set a strict Guard upon themselves in suing, or else not venture to begin any Suit at all.

And thus it appears, that although in *it self*, a Suit at Law be an innocent thing; yet, when 'tis either begun upon an *unjustifiable Ground*, or carried on by a *sinful management*, it is not innocent, but defiles the Conscience of a Christian. It is our *sin*, and we must account for it, when we seek *Revenge* thereby, or *Reparation* of a thing so *small* as cannot bear to have a Suit commenced for it; or if it be a *weighty* matter, when we seek to have our Loss repaired, by *delays of Justice*, *Falsifications*, *Vexatious Arts*, or any other instances of *Injustice*, or *Uncharitableness*, which is a *sinful way of managing our Suit*. When this is the state of our Case there is a great offence in it. And whilst that lasts, it deprives us of the *Favour of God*, and ought to exclude us from the Holy Sacrament. Whereas, were it free of *these*, there would be no hurt in suing, nor any Cause at all why a good Soul should be hindered from the Holy Table thereby.

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Chap.4. *men from the Communion.* 383

As for this Hindrance then, where-  
by Devout minds are oft-times with-  
held from coming to this Holy Feast,  
*viz.* their being engaged in a Suit at  
Law; we see now at length what weight  
is to be laid upon it, and when indeed  
they ought to be hindred by it. For  
if there are no Damages to be expect-  
ed in the Cause, but we sue only for  
Revenge: or if, when there are, they  
are so small as will not bear a Suit,  
but ought to be a matter of *Forgive-  
ness*; or if, when the Loss is of that  
moment which would justify a Suit, we  
transgress any instances of *Justice* or *Cha-  
rity* in managing the Process: our Suit  
is our sin, which will not be forgiven  
us 'till we shew *Repentance of the same*.  
When 'tis unlawful upon the *unjusti-  
fiableness of the Ground*, we sin in it 'till  
we put an end to it; and when it is so  
upon some particular *Injustice*, or *Un-  
charitableness* in the way of management,  
we sin in it 'till that particular is *Correct-  
ed and Amended*. And so long as we are  
Impenitent in either of these, we are un-  
fit for the Holy Sacrament, since no  
man, who allows himself in any sin,  
is worthy to partake of it. But then  
we are equally unfit to *Pray*, or per-  
form any other *Religious Service*, or hope

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for the *Forgiveness* of our *Sins* and *Eternal Happiness*; because, as I have formerly observ'd, *Justice*, *Peace*, and *Charity*, and other *Virtues*, are equally necessary in all these *Cases*. If our *Suit* then is either upon an *unwarrantable Ground*, or sinful in the way of *management*; so long as this sin lasts and is unamended, we are *unworthy to Communicate*. But then that is not all, for so we are also to *Dye*, to *Pray*, or to have any *Spiritual Peace*, or *Comfort*. And this is a state which no wise man will persist in for one moment, but, whenever he lays it to Heart, he will forthwith Repent and get out of it; and when once that is done, this Hindrance is removed, and he may be welcome to Feast with Christ at the Holy Table. But if the *Suit* is innocent in both these *Respects*, and none of these sins do adhere to it; if there is a *weighty Loss* to be repaired, or a *weighty Right* to be got thereby; and we are in all *Points Just*, *Charitable*, and *Peaceable* in looking after that *Right*; or if, when we happen to fail in any instance, we do in that, as we do in all other slips of our *daily Converse*, viz. Watch better the next time, and *immediately Repent* of our failure: then has a *Suit* no of-  
fence

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fence to God, nor any hurt at all in it; and so unfits us not for *any good thing*, and then surely not for the *Blessed Sacrament*. When this is our Case, our having a Tryal at Law depending, need no more hinder us from Communicating, than from any other business. So that if there is nothing else to discourage us, we may safely come to the Lord's Table, and expect to be kindly entertained by him when we do.

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## C H A P. V.

● *Of three other Hindrances.*

## The Contents.

*A Seventh Hindrance, is, because others are not in Charity with them, so that they are afraid lest they want that Peace, which is required of all worthy Receivers. As for other mens uncharitableness, it is their Sin, and so unsits them; but not being ours, it unsits not us for Receiving. if that ought to exclude any from the Holy Sacrament, it had excluded our Saviour Christ and his Apostles, and the Primitive Christians, since none had ever such implacable Enemies as they had. Care to be taken that their Enmity to us be not continued through our own Fault; so that if we have given them just occasion, we must endeavour a Reconciliation; and if we gave them none, we must be carefull not to hate them again. An Eighth Hindrance, is, because 'tis a Presumption in us to come to this Holy Feast, and therefore an humble man ought in all modesty to abstain from it. But, 1. 'Tis no Presumption to come when we are call'd, and to do what we are bidden. 2. 'Tis a very great Presumption to*  
*stay*

Chap. 5. *men from the Communion.* 387

stay away, and leave it undone. 3. If the height of Privilege and Honour vouchsafed to us therein, be sufficient to make an humble man refuse the Communion; it will also carry him to renounce the whole Christian Profession. A Ninth Hindrance, is, because many good People are seldom or never seen there, so that they have good Company, and may be good too, if they abstain from it, But, 1. In enquiring after our own Duty, we are not to ask whether others practise it, but whether Christ has any where enjoynd that it should be practised, 2. If any Good People keep from the Sacrament, that is no part of their goodness, so that therein they are not to be imitated. 3. Though they might be acceptably Good, whilst they were afraid to come to it, through innocent Scruples and honest Ignorance: Yet will it be a very great Fault even in them, to Neglect it after they are better informed, which will not be forgiven, but upon their Amendment thereof.

**A** Seventh Hindrance, which keeps back several Persons from the Holy Sacrament, is, because, although they be with others, yet others are not in Charity with them; and therefore they are afraid lest they want that Peace, which is required of all worthy Receivers.

Now if this ought to hinder them from the Holy Communion, it ought equally to be their hindrance from Prayers, and all Devotion; since there is the same

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necessity in them all, as  
I have noted, of *Peace* and

\* Mat. 5. 23, 24. \* *Reconciliation* with our  
Brethren.

But if this be really their Case, it need  
not hinder them. For if *other* men will  
hate us, do what we can, that is our  
*unhappiness* indeed, whilst we suffer un-  
der it: But it is not our *Fault*, nor ren-  
ders us ever the worse in the eyes of  
Almighty God, since we have done no-  
thing to *deserve* their hatred, nor is it  
in our Power to *help* it. God commands  
us to *Love our Enemies*; so that if we *hate*  
them we sin, and are justly kept back by  
our *own uncharitableness*. But he no where  
Commands us to *make our Enemies Love*  
*us*: so that if after all they will still  
bear Enmity towards us, that is only  
*their own Sin*, and therefore whatever it  
do with *them*, it ought not in any Rea-  
son to be *our* hindrance.

And indeed if it ought, it would much  
more have hindred our Saviour *C'hrist*  
and his *Apostles* from Communicating,  
than now it can any *other* Persons; be-  
cause none of those who stick at this  
Impediment, have any Enemies so bit-  
ter and implacable, as *they* found *theirs*.  
For the *Jews* hated *him* so far, as to seek  
his *Life*, and at last in most barbarous  
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Chap. 2. *men from the Communion.* 389

sort obtain'd their Purpose. And he tells his *Disciples*, that the time was coming, when *every one that kill'd them, would think that therein he approved himself a Friend of Religion, and did God good Service*, Joh. 16. 2. And this they all found by sad Experience, being accounted, as *St. Paul* says, *the very filth of the World, and the off-scouring of all things, i. e.* Nuisances as necessary to be swept away, as Dirt out of the Streets, 1 Cor. 4. 13. and accordingly being Persecuted in every place, till they had laid down their Lives for Christ's sake, and the Gospels. Thus were they reputed as *Publick Enemies* of all Countries, and hated of all men as the vilest Miscreants, who breath'd Infection wheresoever they came, and were the common Pest of all Places. And therefore if this be a sufficient Hindrance from the Holy Communion, that *others hate us*, it should always have hindred, and utterly Excommunicated our Saviour *Christ*, and his Holy *Apostles*, and all the *Christians* of the *first Times*, who, being always implacably hated, and most spitefully Persecuted, upon this account, ought always to have abstain'd, and not to have receiv'd at all.



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As for others being out of *Charity* with us therefore, that ought not to be our hindrance. But then we must take care that we be in *Charity* with them, and that their hatred to us be not either begot or continued through any *Offence* or *Fault* of ours ; else we shall be kept back thro' our own *Uncharitableness*. So that if we gave just Cause for their *Wrathful Indignation*, we must endeavour a *Reconciliation*, by confessing our *Fault*, and repairing the *Wrong* which we did to them, or if we gave none, we must still be careful to love them, though they will not be perswaded to love us, and not harbour any *Enmity* or *Hatred* towards them again.

If we have given just Cause, I say, for their *wrathful Indignation*, through any *Injuries* or *Offences* of ours, we must endeavour a *Reconciliation* by confessing our *Fault*, and repairing the wrong which we did to them. When we have done any thing whereat they are displeased, if they have no Reason for it, we should seek to rectifie their mistakes about it, and inform them better : But if they have, we must give them all proper satisfaction, and make a just amends for it. If the *Offence* be by reason of our *Affronts* or *contumelious Carriage* ; we must

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must acknowledge our Fault to them, and promise to do so no more, and ask their Forgiveness: And if we have injuriously prejudiced them in their Estates, Good Names, or Business; we must, as far as in us lies, repair the loss which they have sustain'd by us. And this God expects from us, before he will accept of our Offerings, or be pleas'd with us in any Ordinance. When thou bringest thy Gift to the Altar, says our Saviour, and there rememberest that thy Brother hath ought against thee, go thy way, first be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift, Mat. 5. 23, 24.

But if they hate us, when we gave them no Cause, nor have in any wise deserved it of them; yet must we still be careful to Love them, though they will not be persuaded to Love us, and not harbour any Enmity, or Hatred towards them again.

We must Love them, I say; not with that Degree of Love, indeed, wherewith we embrace our particular Friends, and those who have better deserved of us; but with that, which we owe in common to all Persons. We must have so much affection for them, as will restrain us both from doing, and speaking Evil of them, and make us exercise that Justice, and shew that common kindness towards them

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them in all Conversation, which is due from us to the promiscuous multitude of other men. For all these instances of *general Charity*, are due to our very *Enemies*, as I have already shewn. So that when they are unmoveable in their Hatred, and persist in their malicious ways; yet must not that *provoke* us into any spiteful Returns, or chase us into any hard Speeches, or injuries or unkind Carriage towards them again.

An *Eighth* Hindrance, which holds back several Persons from coming to this Holy Feast notwithstanding it is so much both their *Duty* and their *Privilege*, as I have shewn, to joyn therein; is, because it looks like an high *Presumption* in us to Feast on the Body and Blood of our Sovereign Lord, and to eat at the same Table with Almighty God; and therefore, say they, an humble man ought in all modesty to abstain from it. I have already considered, that *unworthiness*, which respects the manner of receiving, and answered those, who urge that they are *unworthy to Communicate*, meaning thereby, that they want that height of *Virtuous* and *Devout Tempers*, which they apprehend to be required there-to. But this *unworthiness*, is not from  
the

the want of such *due Dispositions*, or from the *Indecency in the unsuitable Receiving*; but from the *inaccessible height and greatness of the thing*, which they think is so far above us, that *fit or unfit*, no Person is worthy of it, but that 'tis boldness in any one to touch things so surpassing high and excellent. But to satisfy these Persons, who think it a piece of *Arrogance and Presumption* to come to this Holy Sacrament, when the Lord not only *Requests*, but *Commands* them to come, I shall suggest to them these three things.

1. *It is no Presumption to come to this Feast when we are called, and to do what we are bidden.* If we should intrude of our own accord, and come uninvited, we might be too bold, indeed, and very rudely Arrogant. But when we are particularly sent to, and called to come, especially if there be, as in this Case there is, great earnestness and importunity in the Invitation; it is the part of an humble man to comply therewith, and he is not Guilty of the least shew of *Arrogance and Ill-breeding* in so doing. There is *Civility* shewn sometimes in accepting as well as in offering Kindnesses, and it is *Good manners to receive what God*

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God would have us, yea, indeed, to accept any thing from the hand of our *Ber-  
ters*. So that in all *Civility* and *innoffen-  
sive Carriage* we were bound to come, had we nothing more than a *Friendly Invitation*. But besides that, God has expressly enjoyn'd, as I have observ'd, and peremptorily required it of us: So that now we must approach to this Holy Table, not only out of *Civility* and *Respect*, but also out of *Obedience* to his Holy Commandment. And *true Humility* is no hindrance, but the greatest furtherance in the world to such a Service; it being not the part of a *presumptuous*, but of a *truly humble* man to do what he is bidden, and to please those whom he is bound in Duty to Obey.

It is no Presumption then to come to the Holy Sacrament when we are called, and to do what we are bidden. But,

2. It is a very great Boldness and Presumption to stay away, and leave what he bids us do undone. He is no proud man who accepts a Kindness when 'tis offered, and he is earnestly invited to it: But he may shew *Pride* and *Haughtiness* enough, who *slights* and *despises* it. And he is no bold man, that doth what he is

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Commanded; but he shews *Boldness*, and *presumes*, indeed, that dare venture to *Transgress* it. There are no men so bold and presumptuous with God, as they who will act what he forbids, and refuse to do what he enjoyns them. So that it is truly an high Presumption to stay away, when he has expressly charged us, both upon our *Duty* and our *Love* for him, to joyn in the Holy Communion.

3. If the height of *Privilege* and *Honour*, which is vouchsafed to us therein, be sufficient to make an humble modest man refuse the Communion; since his whole Religion is made up of high Characters and honourable Privileges, it will not rest in that alone, but will carry him on equally to renounce the whole Christian Profession. What thinks he of Holy Baptism, wherein he was made not only a *Servant*; but a *Child of God*; not only a *Friend*, but a *Brother* and *joynt Heir* with Christ; and an *Inheritor*, not of a small Estate, but of a *Kingdom*, and that no cheap or fading one neither, but of the *Kingdom of Heaven*? What thinks he of the *happinefs* of another Life, wherein God will fill us with unutterable Joys and adorn us with Crowns and Scepters, and take us as our Saviour says,  
† into

† into the *same Throne*  
*with himself* ? What † Rev. 3. 21;  
 thinks he of his *Redemp-*  
*tion* and the *Rate* it cost, not be-  
 ing obtainable unless *God's only Son*,  
 would come down from *Heaven*, and be  
*made man*, and pay down his own *Life*  
 for it ? Are not *all these* as superlatively  
 highthings, and as much above us, as  
*Feasting with God in the Communion* is ?  
 Is it not as great a *Presumption* in us to  
 become *God's Sons*; and to inherit *King-*  
*doms*, and to hope for *Crowns* and *Thrones*,  
 and *Scepters* : as it is to sit down with  
 him as his *Guests*, and to eat and drink  
 in his own *Presence* ? Is it not as high as  
*Arrogance* to admit that *Christ* should die  
 for us, as it is to come and remember  
 his *Death*, and to accept of those *Benefits*  
 which are convey'd to us thereby ? All  
 these things are infinitely above us, and  
 we could not have had the Face to have  
 asked any of them, if God had refer-  
 red it to our own choice, and bid us  
 name what we would for our own selves.  
 But yet, since in his unbounded Love  
 and Kindness he has *freely offered* them,  
 we must have the good manners in all  
*forward Thankfulness* and *Humility* to ac-  
 cept them, and not out of a shew of *Mo-*  
*desty*, and *unreasonable Self-abasement*, re-  
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*use* the same. When God calls us then to Feast with him in the Holy Sacrament, and to feed upon the Body and Blood of our dearest Lord; we must not hold back because there is so eminent a Privilege, and so high an Honour in it. For we desire no greater Favour, or higher Honour therein, than in being made *God's Children*, as we were in *Holy Baptism*; than in *Christ's Incarnation, Death, and Suffering*; than in the offers of *Crowns, and Thrones*, and the other *Glorious Privileges of our Religion*. So that if the *Fear of receiving too much honour from God*, ought to put us by the *Communion*; it ought as much to the full to put us by our *Baptism*, and the whole *Christian Profession*.

As for those then, who are hindred from the Holy Sacrament, by the fear of being too *Bold and Presumptuous* with Almighty God, in coming to a *Feast* which has such *height of Privilege and Honour* in it: they are hindred without any just Ground, and kept back by that which ought not to hinder them. For it is no *Presumption*, but the part of *humble men*, to come when they are call'd, and to do what they are bidden; but it is a very great *Boldness and Presumption* to stay away, and leave it undone; and if the  
height



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height of Privilege and Honour vouchsafed therein, be sufficient to keep back humble Souls from this Feast, it must also keep them back from Baptism, wherein the same Honours are conferr'd which are conferr'd in the Eucharist, and carry them in the same guise of Modesty to refuse Christ's dying for them, and all the hopes of Heaven, and, in a word, their Christianity and whole Religion too.

A Ninth Plea, whereby several Persons are wont to excuse their not coming to the Holy Sacrament, is, because many Good People are seldom or never seen thereat, and therefore they may be good too, and have good Company, if they keep away from it.

Now, as for those who urge this excuse, I would desire them to consider, that when they are enquiring after their own Duty in any matter, it is no right way to ask whether others Practise it, but whether their Lord has any where Commanded, that it should be practised. For mens Practice is not always fully answerable to their own Duty, and so is a very false Rule whereby to judge of ours. All Persons have their Faults, and though no Good man can continue in any wilful ones, yet will even they be subject to several Ignorant  
slips,

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*slips, and unadvised miscarriages.* But when at any time they either *wilfully* break any Commandment, or *ignorantly* mistake it ; that is no warrant for us to do so likewise. So that if we would truly understand whether we are bound to Communicate, our way is not to enquire whether others do it, but whether our Lord has any where enjoyn'd it to be done ; for if he has, we are certainly oblig'd to Communicate, whether others do it or no.

But in more Particular Answer to this Plea, I must tell them,

1. That, *If any Good People keep away from the Blessed Sacrament, that is no part of their Goodness but their Blemish, so that therein they are not to be imitated.* For we have God's express Command to come, and that we cannot slight, without being disobedient, and guilty of a plain Transgression. We are call'd therein, to shew our selves *thankfully mindfull* of our Blessed Saviour's Death, and of all that he has done or suffered for our sakes ; and this Call we cannot deny, without proclaiming our selves most *shamefully unthankfull* towards him. We are summon'd in, to *profess Repentance and Amendment* of all our sins ; and this we cannot honestly decline, if *really* we are

are resolv'd to leave them. We are invited to *declare our selves at Peace* with all the Members of our Lord, and reconciled to all the *Christian World*; and this Invitation no man can fairly refuse, who in very deed is in *Charity* with all men, and is become an *heartly Friend* to them. God's *Laws* pre-emptorily *enjoyn* us, and the things therein imply'd do straitly oblige us to partake of the Holy Sacrament, when we have an offer of a fit opportunity for the same; so that every man, who makes *Conscience of his Duty*, and regards Obedience to his Lord, must be careful to joyn therein. And it is the *Greatest means of a good Life*, and Obligation to Amendment that can be prescribed; so that every one who has a *just care of his own Soul*, and is earnestly desirous of Vertuous Improvements, will seek to be admitted to it. A Good man's *Duty* binds him, and the *care of his own Soul* engages him to Communicate; so that there is neither *Virtue* nor *Prudence* shewn in staying away, nor is it any part of Goodness to Neglect it. And therefore if any Persons otherwise Good, are seldom seen at the Blessed Sacrament; that is no part of their Goodness, but their Fault,

so

so that therein they are not to be imitated.

2. *Though they might be acceptably Good whilst they were afraid to come to it, through innocent Scruples, and honest Ignorance ; yet will it be a very great Fault even in them to Neglect it after they are better informed, which will not be forgiven them, but upon their Amendment thereof.*

A Good Man cannot indulge himself in any known Sin ; for he ceases to be good and acceptable to God, if he persists in any sins after he is plainly told of them, and has had his Duty evidently set before him. *The Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all unrighteousness, saith St. Paul, Rom. 1. 18. And he that breaks one Law, saith St. James, is Guilty of all, i. e. of that Eternal Punishment which is denounced, not barely to some one, but to all, Jam. 2. 10.* So that when once this Great Duty of coming to the Holy Sacrament is clearly laid out, and his Conscience is inlightned and possessed with a sence thereof ; he can be no Good man, who willfully holds off still, and refrains to come to it. Whilst he was perplex'd with *Doubts* about it, indeed, and either through the loose Discourses of some, thought himself not  
obliged.

*obliged*; or, through the unreasonable *Rigor* and *Severity* of others, after all his Repentance and full purposes of Amendment, thought himself still *unprepared* to receive the same: for the pitiable-ness of his *Ignorance*, and *unwill'd* mistake, so long as they lasted, his Neglect thereof may be excused and connived at. But if after all his *Doubts* have been *resolv'd*, and things have been set in a *clearer Light*, he continue still to slight the Lords Table; then he is Guilty of a very great offence, which will not be forgiven till he Repents of it and Amends it. To him that knows to do Good, and doth it not, saith St. James, to him 'tis Sin, Jam. 4. 17. And when any willful sin stands charg'd on our account, it will not be struck off, till we forsake and turn away from it. For to all such Sinners, God's Declaration is this, *Except ye Repent, ye shall all perish*, Luc. 13. 3.

As for those then, who urge this in excuse for their not coming to the Holy Sacrament, because *several Good People* are seldom, or never seen at it: My Answer to them in sum is this. In judging our Duty, we must not take our measures from other mens Practice, but from our Blessed Lord's Commandments; since,

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since, if they disobey any Precept, that is no excuse to us, nor gives us any warranty for Companies sake to disobey likewise. And as for the Sacrament in particular, if any good People keep away from it, that is no part of their Goodness; so that therein they are not to be imitated. Nay, if they continue in this Neglect, after their Consciences are rightly instructed, and informed about it; they cease to be Good, and commit a Damning offence, an Impenitent continuance in any one known sin putting any Person out of a State of Grace. Whilst they were held back purely by Doubts and Scruples, and want of Knowledge without their own Fault; their Omission was fit to be connived at, and they might continue acceptably Good notwithstanding it. But if still they persist therein, after they know more, and are better instructed about the same; they are Guilty of a very Criminal Neglect, which will not be passed over, but upon the same Terms as all other known sins are, *i. e.* their Repentance of it. If they stay away out of Ignorance and Mistake, all they can expect, is, to be pitied, but not to be commended for their omission; and if out of wilfulness, after their Conscience  
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has been set right therein, they will be severely punish'd unless they are timely reclaimed from it. So that no man must ever hope to justify himself in refraining the Lord's Table, because he has good Company, and knows of several others, whom he takes to be very Holy Persons, that are wont to refrain it too.

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## C H A P. VI.

*Of three other Hindrances.*

## The Contents.

A Tenth Hindrance is, because others, who are unworthy of the Holy Sacrament, are admitted to join in it. But, 1. They ought not to be forward in judging others unworthy, lest they be mistaken in their judgment of them. 2. When some, who as they have great cause to think, are unworthy, do receive, yet ought not that to hinder them from receiving too. For if it be a sufficient Hindrance, it had equally bindred our Saviour Christ, and the Primitive Christians.. It ought not only to hinder us from the Communion, but also from being Members of the Christian Church and Profession. But 'tis plainly of no force for either of them, since one man shall not bear another's burden, but every man shall bear his own. St. Paul's forbidding to eat with Fornicators, &c. 1 Cor. 5. 11. shewn not to speak against mixt Communion. 3. If still any are really offended at the Communion of the Wicked, upon complaint made against them in the Congregation, they are to be suspended from the Holy Table, and denied the Sacrament. An



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Eleventh Hindrance, is the Gesture of Kneeling, which is required in Receiving the Communion. When any are absent upon this account, there is no excuse from it. Three things insisted on, to prevent their being hindered thereby. 1. Kneeling is no unsuitable Posture in receiving the Holy Sacrament, so that if we were left at Liberty, we might have enough to justify our selves in making use of it. 2. It is appointed by our Governors, whom God commands us to obey in all lawful Things; so that every Good man ought to observe it. But if it is neither had Authority to enjoin, nor Reason to recommend it, but another Posture might be better used. Yet, 3. Since it may lawfully be used too, tho' not so well as they think, for the Sacraments sake, which is not otherwise to be had, they should at least comply with it. No Hindrance to this Compliance, because the Gesture of Kneeling is different from that which our Saviour used. For so is sitting too, and therefore they and we are equally concerned to answer this argument. That the Posture he used was no part of the Institution, so that the Institution is not broken when the Posture is altered. Neither that Posture, nor any other, has a Command of God for it; so that none is necessary, but all are still indifferent. When a Posture, different from that at the first Institution, was introduced in Sacraments, our Saviour himself, and they who followed him, have submitted to it. Again, no Hindrance to our Receiving the Sacrament kneeling, from the fear of worshipping the Bread, or introducing a Popish Rite. A conclusion of this point.

**A** Tenth Cause, which many Persons are wont to Assign for their dissenting themselves from this Holy Feast

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is, because others, who are unworthy of it, are admitted to joyn in it. Tho' this be a very good thing, yet they fear they should give offence in doing it with ill Partners; and how worthy soever they may be in themselves, they are jealous lest they should be defiled by the unworthiness of others. So that unless they can receive the Sacrament in an unmixt Company, and only with the pure and true Believers, they think best to stay away, and not receive it at all.

But that they may not be kept back by this Hindrance, I shall observe to them these three things.

1. That they ought not to be forward in judging any others unworthy to Communicate, lest they be mistaken in their judgment of them. For every Penitent Man, who is fully Resolved to leave all his Sins, is really worthy to receive the Blessed Sacrament: and whether the Person whom they think unworthy be so resolved or no, is very hard for them to judge, since no Man can see into anothers heart, and only God and his own Soul are privy to it. When he comes to the Lord's Table, every Communicant professes to Repent, and promises to lead a New Life thenceforward. and when he solemn-

ly declares he is thus resolved, 'tis hard for another Person, who cannot see into his Soul, to say he is not, but is still impenitent. Tho' all Good Men therefore may be free in judging of themselves, yet ought they to be very wary how they pass a Judgment on the unworthiness of others. They must not be forward to pronounce of it, because 'tis hard for them to know it; so that when they give Sentence against their Brethren in this point, 'tis venturously done, and they are liable to be deceived therein.

2. *When some others, who, as they have great cause to think, are unworthy, do Receive the Holy Sacrament; yet ought not that to hinder them from receiving it too.* Our Business should not be to move Questions and Disputes about the preparedness of others, but to be careful duly to prepare our selves; and when once we are fitly qualified for it, we ought to come whether they be so or no. Their unworthiness will have all its effect upon themselves, but will not hinder our acceptance, nor ought to put us by from doing both our Blessed Saviour, and our own Souls this Service.

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To shew this, I shall observe these three things.

1. *If the Company of ill and unworthy Persons be a sufficient Hindrance from the Holy Communion, it is not so barely unto us, but would equally have hindered our Saviour Christ, and the Primitive Christians.* For when our Lord eat his own Supper, it was not with a Select Company of worthy Receivers, but with a mixt multitude of Saints and Sinners. Thus he found it in the Jewish Passover; for all the Congregation of Israel, both good and bad, were to eat of it, and none but Foreigners and hired Servants were excluded from it, *Exod. 12. 45, 47.* And the like mixture of Guests he allowed, when he instituted this Feast, instead of their Passover. For in great likelihood Judas, who, as the Scripture says, was a \* Thief, and the Son of Perdition, † was one of the twelve who Communicated with him, *Mar. 26. 20, 25, 26. Lu. 22. 20, 21.* And in the first Times, all Christians, as I have \* shewn, \* Part. 1 Cap. 4 who came together to pray to God, met also to receive the Holy Sacrament, that being then a constant part of their Publick Worship. The

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Number of *Communicants* in those Days was the same with the number of *Christians* or *Baptized Persons*. For all Men then met in the Communion, who were made Members of Christ's Mystical Body, the Church by *Baptism*, and had neither broke themselves off from it again by *Schism*, nor were cut off by *Excommunication*; as St. Paul plainly intimates, when he says of those many, who make up the one Body, that they are all partakers of that one Bread, 1 Cor. 10. 17: and of all those who have been baptized into one Body, that they have been all made to drink into one Spirit, 1 Cor. 12. 13. So that their *Communion*s, as well as ours, were mixed *Assemblies*, which were made up of worthy and unworthy Receivers. And therefore if others Mens unworthiness ought to be our Hindrance, it should also have hindred our Blessed Saviour Christ, and his Holy Apostles, and the Primitive Christians, who, if this be a good Reason for it, should all have forborn the Sacrament, because Judas, a lost man, and other unprepared, and unworthy Persons, met also with them at the same time to partake thereof.

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As to the instance of *Judas*, which proves so convincingly the lawfulness of Receiving with unworthy Persons, some, perhaps, may make a Doubt of it, and question whether he staid to Receive with the rest. *St. Matthew*, 'tis true, says, *Christ sat down with the Twelve.* And while they were eating, took Bread, &c. *Mat.* 26. 20, 25, 26. Nay, *St. Luke* says farther, that after he had instituted, and delivered his own Supper, *Luke* 22. 19, 20; he particularly told them, that the hand of him who betrayed him, was with him on the Table, v. 21. But *St. John*, in the account which he gives, says, that *Judas* went immediately out after he had receiv'd the Sop, *Joh.* 13. 30. And a Sop dipped in the thick Sawce being part of the Paschal Supper, from his going out immediately after the Receipt of the Sop, some would presume that he stay'd only to partake in the Passover, but arose and went out before Christ instituted his own Supper, which was not begun till the Passover was ended.

But in Answer to this, it may suffice to Note, that the Ground of this Conjecture is a mistake. For this Supper, mentioned by *St. John*, whereat he says *Judas* went out immediately after

the Receipt of the Sop, was not the Paschal Supper. For, besides that 'tis expressly said of St. John's Supper, that *that the Devil made his entry into Judas after it was ended*, v. 2. 27; which could not therefore be the *Passover*, because as St. Luke testifies, he had entred into him before the *Passover* was fully come, when it only *drew nigh*, Luke 22. 1, 3. Besides this, I say, St. John says expressly of the Supper he mentions, that it was before the *Feast of the Passover*, v. 1. And when, during that Supper our Lord bade Judas *dispatch what he had to do quickly*, v. 27. Some of the other Disciples took the meaning of that to be, as if he had bid him *buy what was needful against the Feast*, v. 29, which they could never have understood to be meant so, if they had then been making an end of the Paschal Feast, it being vain, indeed, at the end of a Feast, to think of making Provision for it. So that the Supper whereat Judas went out immediately after the Sop, and stay'd not to see the rest, was not the *Solemn Feast of the Passover*, which Jesus celebrated at *Jerusalem*; but some other ordinary Supper, and very probably that which St.

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*Matthew* speaks of, which he had at *Bo-  
thany*, in the house of *Simon the Leper*,  
*two days* before, *Mat.* 26. 2, 6, 7: But  
when the *Passover* came, he stay'd to  
the end of it, and of the *Lord's Sup-  
per* which followed it; *Jesus* plainly  
declaring, as I observed, that the hand  
of the *Traitor* was with him on the *Ta-  
ble*, after both the *Bread* and *Wine* were  
blessed and distributed.

2. If the Company of unworthy Persons  
be a just impediment from the *Holy Com-  
munion*, it ought to hinder us also from  
being Members of the *Christian Church* and  
*Profession*. For the *Church* it self is a  
mixt multitude of fit and unfit, of ho-  
ly and unholy Persons. It is compared  
to a *Net*, wherein *Fish* of all sorts are  
caught, both good and bad, *Mat.* 13. 47,  
48, to a *Field*, where both *Wheat* and  
*Tares* spring up together, and wherein both  
must grow together till the *Harvest*, *v.* 24.  
25, 30. All *Christians* are not such as  
their *Saviour Christ* was, and such as  
their *Religion* requires they should be:  
and therefore if we refuse to share in  
any holy thing whilst some unworthy  
Persons pretend to it, and will not joyn  
in any *Act* or *State* wherein ill men *Par-  
ticipate*; we must not only shun the



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*Communion*, but cease also to be Members of the Church, or to Profess the Christian Religion. Nay, I might add farther, since all Communities have some Corrupt Members, and in every Body of Men there are some Vicious as well as some Godly Persons; if we decline all Society and Fellowship which has ill Men to mix and partake in it, we must not stop in avoiding the Communion, and leaping out of the Christian Church and Profession, but, if we run on so far as this principle will lead us, become Out-Laws to Families, Town-ships, Kingdoms, yea, to all Mankind.

3. *One shall not bear anothers burden, but every Man shall bear his own*; so that if not we, but only they are unworthy, we are safe, and may freely come, and they alone are debarr'd from Receiving. God will not punish one Soul for anothers fault, or be angry at this, because that Person has deserv'd it. But every Man shall stand or fall by his own Work, and either be approved or rejected according as it prepares him for the one or the other. Let every Man prove his own Work, saith the Apostle, for every Man shall bear his own Burden, Gal. 6. 4, 5. So that if we take care to come worthily our selves, we shall be kindly treated

ed and accepted by him, and not any ways prejudiced or frown'd upon, for the unworthiness and undue Preparation of other Men.

But against all this it may be objected, that this *eating in mixt Communion* is against the Rule of St. Paul, who forbids the Christians at Corinth to keep company with Drunkards, Fornicators, Railers, &c. or to eat Bread with them, 1 Cor. 5. 11.

But in Answer to this it may be observed, that the *eating* there spoken of, is not that of the *Communion* in the *Publick Assemblies*, but only that of *civil Conversation at Private Tables*. This was one Rule of Discipline in the First Times. For when the Authority of the established Guides, and the awefulness of Church-censures, were insufficient to reduce Offenders in a Divided Church; the Apostles ordered all Private Christians to shun their company and acquaintance, till thereby they had shamed them out of their evil courses. Thus they dealt with misguided Hereticks. *If there come any unto you, saith St. John, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed,* 2 John 10. According-

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\* Ac sunt qui hoc ipsum (viz. Polycarpum) commemorantem audiverint, Joannem Domini Discipulum, cum Ephesi ad Balneum iisset, ac Cerinthum intus contipexisset, ilotum Balneo exiliisse, atque his verbis usum fuisse, fugiamus ne Balneum ruat quod intus sit Cerinthus veritatis Hostis. Quia ipse quoque Polycarpus, cum Marcion aliquando in ipsius conspectum venisset, ac Dixisset, agnosce nos; respondit, agnoscō Primo genitum Satanæ. Tanto studio Apostoli, atq; ipsorum Discipuli cavebant, ne cum quoquam eorum, qui veritatem adulterabant, vel sermonis commercium inirent. *Item. adv. Hæres. l. 3. c. 3.*

*Persons,* who despised Church Orders,

ing to which Rule, when he went into the Bath at Ephesus, and found the Heretick Cerinthus there, he leaped out again unwashed, saying, Let us fly from this Enemy of the Truth, lest by staying with him, the Bath fall down upon us, as Irenæus says, several then alive could testifie from the mouth of Polycarp, one of his Disciples. And in like manner, Polycarp himself, when the Heretick Marcion desired him to take Notice of him, and Salute him; replied, he would take Notice of him no otherwise, then as of Satan's First-born. So studiously cautious, says Irenæus, were the Apostles and their Disciples, of entering into any Discourse or Converse with Heretical Depravers of the Truth. Thus also they dealt with stubborn and contumacious

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and the establishments of their Spiritual Governors. If any man obey not our word by this Epistle, Note that man, and have no company with him, says St. Paul, that he may be ashamed, 2 Thess. 3. 14. And thus they dealt, lastly, with scandalous and noted Evil Livers. We command you, Brethren, in the Name of Christ, that ye withdraw your selves from every Brother that walketh disorderly, and not according to the Tradition he received of us, 2 Thess. 3. 6. And so again to the Corinthians in this place. If any man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, I write unto you not to keep company with such an one, no not to eat with him, i. e. Exclude him from all Familiarity and civil Conversation, 1 Cor. 5. 11. An Emphasis lies in these words, *no, not to eat with him*: noting a restraint from that, which seemed to most men a very little thing, as eating is in Conversation, though it be of highest account in the Communion. And moreover, the eating here forbidden, is *such eating and keeping Company, with loose and disorderly Christians, as was not forbid with other disorderly walkers, who were not Christians*; which cannot be said of Sacramental eating, but

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but only of eating at Private Tables,  
v. 10. 12.

Indeed, as for this withdrawing of Acquaintance, Converse and Trading from such offenders (which was a kind of *civil* Excommunication, that Private Christians would use of themselves when the scandals were notorious, as well as the ordinary consequent in those days of the Publick censures of the Church) it was no lasting thing, but wore out by degrees, and was much laid aside in time. Whilst it was a prudent rule of Discipline, and fit to shame and reclaim *Heretical* or *vicious* Men, it was used towards them; and that by the Private Zeal of Good People, tho' no Publick censure had passed against them. And this it was fit to do whilst Christians lived among Heathens; for then they would desire to keep in with their own Party for protection: and whilst the Hereticks, and scandalous Livers, were few in Number; for then they could not have a considerable Party of their own to abet and support them. And whilst Religion was in this state, which rendred it a prudent Course, as it was most especially in the Apostles Days, this, as I have shewn, was a common *Rule and Practice* of the Church.

But

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But when once Christianity became the common Religion, and both Heresies and Vices would have Great Names, and Numbers enough to abet and support themselves, if all the Orthodox and Godly should decline them: then this renouncing of their converse, would have served to combine the vicious and erroneous into united Numbers, and put them out of the way of Good counsels and opportunities of Repentance, and every where extremely endanger'd and laid waste the civil Peace. So that the state of things being alter'd, which made it prudent and practicable, this Rule vanished by degrees, and was laid aside. It lived longer in the Zeal of some particular Persons, who withdrew themselves from all converse of vicious Livers, and Heretical Opiniators; whereof *Monica* the Mother of *St. Austin* is an instance in that Age, who, as he himself testifies, \* refused to Dyet with him her own Son when he was perverted to the Heresie of the Manichees. But as for the Body of Christians, they left it off; this way, of private Chri-

\* Nam unde illud somnium, quo eam consolatus es, ut vivere me secum crederet, & habere mecum eandem mensam in Domo, quod nolle expe- rat, averians & detestans blasphemias erroris mei. *Aug. Con. l. 3. c. 11*  
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Christians renouncing all civil converse with such as were not publickly Excommunicated and cut off by the Church-censures, being laid aside, as St. Chrysostom relates, before his Time. And so it continues still, not only in our Church, but in all other Sects and Parties that are among us. For whatever some may do upon Discretionary Grounds, to encourage and maintain their own Party; yet none of them think themselves obliged in Conscience to confine their conversation or dealing to their own Church, and neither to be acquainted, nor Trade with Men of other Opinions, but to do all among themselves.

Besides all this, for a fuller clearing of this place, I add farther, that when this Rule of not keeping company with open tho' unexcommunicated Offenders, was most of all observ'd, as it was in the Apostles Days, yet even then did it admit of many limitations, and it was still allow'd to company with them in several cases.

It forbid not Private Christians to joyn with them when they met together in Publick Offices of Religion. For Prayers and Sacraments, are a Duty we all owe to Almighty God, which we are indispensably bound to perform, and must

must not desert, because ill Men intrude to do the same. And thus our Blessed Saviour kept company, and eat with Judas himself; and so did the Church of Corinth, and other Churches, with other Offenders, in those very Days, as I have shewn, when this Rule was given.

It forbid not joyning with them, in the Duties of any Relation. For notwithstanding this Rule, Children were to honour and obey their Parents, and Wives their Husbands, and Servants their Masters; and Subjects their Princes; and all Men, to shew Gratitude to their Benefactors; whatever ill Life they lead, or Heretical Opinion they had imbib'd. Though a believing Woman have an unbelieving Husband, says St. Paul, let her not leave him, 1 Cor. 7. 12, 13. And he bids † † Col. 3. 20.

Children to obey their Parents in all things; and \* Tit. 3. 4. \* Subjects to obey Magistrates; and † Servants † 1 Pet. 2. 18. to be Subject to their own Masters, at a time when they lived under Heathens.

It



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It forbid not any Conversation, which sought to do them good, and endeavour'd their amendment. For, at the same time when St. Paul enjoyns this withdrawing from them, he directs still to admonish them for their Reformation. Note that man, and have no company with him; yet count him not as an enemy, to be looked no longer after, but admonish him as a Brother, 2 Thess. 3. 14, 15.

Nay, lastly, It forbid not Good Christians to company with them, when it was highly convenient and advantageous to themselves, but allowed it, as need required, in the way of Trade and Livelihood. This St. Paul thought a sufficient Reason, why this Rule should not keep them, from dealing and conversing with Gentile Sinners. When I wrote to you, says he, not to company with Fornicators, I meant, not to forbid your companying altogether with the Fornicators of this world, for then must ye needs go out of the world, and could not drive any Trade or Business, your Heathen Neighbours, among whom your concerns lie, generally being such, 1 Cor. 5. 9, 10. And where the same Detriment would have ensued, by forbearing to deal with offending Christians; in reason, and equity, there would have been the same Allow.

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lowance. The Rule was not given to punish the Innocent, but to reclaim the Guilty; so that in any case, where the Good were like to be oppressed by it, it would have been equitably relaxed, and not have obliged at all.

As for this place of St. Paul then, it makes nothing against *mixt Communion*, nor forbids us to receive the Sacrament in company with an ill Man. For it speaks not of companying, and eating in the Sacrament, but in civil Conversation. There, indeed, while the Church was young, it did oblige for a time: tho' that time is long since gone, this course of shunning all converse with unexcommunicated Offenders, being vanished long ago, as the state of Religion alter'd which made it prudent, and being now universally Neglected over all the World. And even during that time, wherein it did oblige; it was with many exceptions. For it allow'd as of joyning with them Publickly in Divine Offices, and also in the Duty of any particular Relations: so did it likewise of all such Conversation, as either sought to reclaim them, or was either necessary, or highly advantageous to the sound Christians themselves. But as for Religion, it neither requires,  
nor

nor authorizes any Persons, to withdraw from any Offices of it, when ill Men joyn in them. It is *Church-Governors*, that must keep them away from these by *Publick Censures*; and no part of the care of *Private Christians*, to prevent meeting them there, by *absenting of themselves*. So that at Prayers and Sacraments, the Good must be sure to shew themselves, whatever *Offenders* happen to be there too.

But if the Presence of such Persons, would Defile our *Ordinary Converse*, would it not much more Defile *Divine Offices*, may some say, and stain our Communion in *Prayers and Sacraments*, which being more Sublime and Sacred things, must needs be more Prophaned by the company of such Persons? To which I answer, that if their very presence did Defile our Converse, or our Private Tables, so indeed it would. But the reason why *Private Christians* are to withdraw themselves from such Offenders, is not least they should be Defiled by being in the same place with them, for that they are not, except they either joyn in their Sins, or learn some ill from them: but that they may reclaim the Offenders by their withdrawing. This with-holding Converse, is a Rule

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of Discipline, which was prescribed for the sake of those Sinners, whom they withdraw from, and was intended, as St. Paul says, to *shame them*, 2 Thess. 3. 14. And this might be enjoyned in civil Conversation, because that is a Free thing; but not in Prayers and Sacraments, because they are necessary Duties, and no Man, when he is call'd to them, is at liberty to absent from them.

Thus ought not the sight of some unworthy Persons joyning in it, to strike any Terror into us, or drive us from the Holy Sacrament. There is a great Sin, and a great Danger in unworthy Receiving, which is enough to discourage all impenitent unworthy Men from offering at it: and where the Censures of the Church are held in any esteem, and are likely to gain their end, thro' the Awe and Reverence which Men have for them, the Governors of the Church, both out of Compassion for their Souls, and concern for the honour of this Ordinance, may see cause to remove them from it. But if neither the Danger of the thing, nor any Affectionate and fair warning, nor any enfeebled Hand of Discipline, when it is become impotent, and of small account, through the Number of Offenders, who

who are too strong for it, or through the multitude of Schisms and Divisions, one Party entertaining those whom another shuts out, which mightly impairs the Force of it. If none of these, I say, can keep them out, but unworthy Men will still press in, and presume to Communicate; yet is their unworthiness only to themselves, but as for others, who are truly worthy, they have no hurt at all thereby. They shall not suffer for their Brethrens sins, nor are incapacitated by their unsuitnesses; so that whilst they have no unworthiness in their own souls, they may safely approach to the Holy Table, and chearfully receive still.

But yet farther.

3. If any should be really scandalized at the Presence of those who are notoriously wicked, or who have done any wrong to their Neighbours, either in word, or deed: upon Complaint made against them in the Congregation, they are to be suspended from the Holy Table, and denied the Sacrament. For this care our Church has taken in this Case, to prevent all those, whose wickedness gives publick Scandal and Offence, from sharing in those Holy Mysteries. If any Communicant, says the Rubrick before the Communion Service, be an open and notorious evil Liver, or have done any wrong to his Neigh-

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Neighbour by word, or deed, so that the Congregation be thereby offended; the Curate having knowledge thereof, shall call him, and advertize him, that in any wise he presume not to come to the Lord's Table, until he hath openly declared himself to have truly Repented and Amended his former naughty Life, that the Congregation may thereby be satisfied, which before were offended; and that he hath recompensed the Parties to whom he hath done wrong, or at least declare himself to be in full purpose so to do as soon as conveniently he may.

As for those then, who are kept back from this Holy Feast, because they see some unworthy Persons are admitted to it, my Answer to them in brief is this: that They ought not to be forward in judging any others unworthy, because 'tis hard for them to know it, and they are liable to be mistaken in their Judgment of them. And that when they have great and plain cause to conclude others unworthy, yet ought not that in any wise to hinder them, who are truly worthy, from coming to Receive too. For if the Company of unworthy Receivers were a just Hindrance from the Holy Sacrament, it would have hindred our Blessed Lord, and the Primitive Christians, since it lay in their way, as well as now  
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it doth in *ours*; it would not rest in with-holding us from the Holy Communion, but would serve equally to put us by from being *Members* of the Church, or professing the *Christian Religion*. But it is plainly of no force for either of them, since *one* Man shall not bear *another's*, but *every one his own Burthen*. But if still any are really scandalized by the Company of such as are notoriously wicked, that offence may be removed when they have a mind to remove it; for upon complaint made, those unworthy Persons are to be *suspended* from the Holy Table, and denied the Sacrament.

An *Eleventh Hindrance*, whereby several Persons are kept back from joyning in this Feast, is the *Gesture* which is required thereat. For though right-gladly they would be admitted to the Holy Sacrament, yet they say they dare not Kneel, as the Church appoints all Men to do when they Receive it.

Now when any Persons refuse the Holy Sacrament upon this account, they have no sufficient Plea, or just Excuse from it. When our Blessed Lord shall ask them at the last Day, *why they did not Communicate according to his appointment*? It will be but a bad Answer in them to say, it was because they could

not sit, or use some other Posture there, which they thought convenient. For since he has only required the Thing, but has no where enjoyn'd the Gesture which we are to Receive in; he will have just reason to reply to such Men, that then it seems they would not do what he bid them, unless at the same time they could do that also which he had not bidden, nor perform his will, unless withal they should be allowed to have their own; which justly merits a severe Reproof, but is far from being a matter of Commendation.

But that they may not inexcusably Neglect so great a Commandment, upon so weak a Reason for it, I would offer to their Consideration these three things.

1. *Kneeling is no unsuitable Posture in Receiving the Holy Sacrament, so that if we were left at Liberty, we might have enough to justify our selves in making use of it.* For the Sacrament, as I have already shewn, is a Religious Feast, wherein we are set in the presence of, and are concerned with Almighty God: and when we have to do with him, 'tis no ways unfit sure to use such a Posture, as is Humble and Reverent. It is a Feast, wherein we receive the greatest Benefits, no less

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than our Saviour Christ's most Blessed Body and Blood, i. e. those Benefits which his Bloody Death procured: and when we receive Gifts, especially of that infinite Price, and from our Betters and Supreme Governors, it cannot misbecome us to use such Carriage, as expresses most Respect and Thankfulness. It is a Feast, whereat we confirm the New Covenant, and solemnly give Thanks and Praise to Christ, and pour out many Prayers and Promises to our Heavenly Lord: and when we are exercising Repentance, and uttering Praise, and making solemn Prayers and Oblations, it is not certainly improper to use such Gestures, as best become Devotions. In the Sacrament, we have to do with Almighty God, and receive most noble Gifts, and act most humble Repentance in shamefully confessing and renouncing of our sins, and give most hearty Thanks, and put up most ardent Prayers: and therefore that Posture must needs suit well with it, which becomes these Services. And that Kneeling will be allowed to do by all Persons, since it has been ordinarily well liked in all times, nay, preferred before others for the Posture of Devotions. As it is a Supper and a Feast, some are apt to think sitting, which

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with us at least is the ordinary *Table-Posture*, to be more convenient. But as this is not a *Common*, but a *Religious Feast*, wherein we have to do with God, and perform so many things whereto all *inward Reverence* and *Humility* is required, there are reasons enough which most justly *Authorize Kneeling* too: so that if we direct our *Eyes* to them, we shall soon see that it may very reasonably be used, and is in no wise unsuitable or improper for it. And therefore if we were left at *Liberty* to Receive it as we pleas'd, we might have enough to justify our selves in making use of it.

2. *Kneeling* is appointed by our *Governors*, whom God Commands us to obey in all *lawful things*; so that every *Good Man* who is under *Authority* ought to observe it. God requires us to be subject to *Principalities and Powers*, and to obey *Magistrates*, Tit.

3. 1. and to obey them that have the *Rule* over us, and to submit our selves; for they watch for our *Souls*, as they that must give an account of them, *Heb. 13. 17.* Now to obey, is to do what we are bidden; so that when they command this *Posture*, we are bound in all *Duty* and *Submissi-on* to comply with them. Before they enjoyn'd it, we were at *Liberty* to use

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either it, or another, according to our own Discretion. But when once they have interposed their Authority, St. Paul tells us, that Obedience in all *Lawful* things, such as *Kneeling* is, is our Duty. So that although we think another might be better used, and, were we left to our selves, would make use of it: yet when once they have enjoyned this, we must deny our selves, and submit to it.

But if *Kneeling* had neither any Authority effectually to enjoin it, nor any Reason from it self sufficient to recommend it; but that *sitting*, or some other Posture, were much fitter to be used: yet,

3. Since even in their own opinion it may at least lawfully be used too, tho' not so well as they think, if men have any due value for, or desire of the Holy Sacrament, for its sake, and rather than miss of it, they should at least comply with this Posture.

When we are hindred from the Holy Sacrament by little things, and refuse to Communicate unless we can have it ordered according to our own liking in all Points, 'tis a sign we do not think we greatly need it, nor are very desirous of it; for if we were, 'tis certain small matters would not put us by it. Were

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we fully sensible how much it is both our *Duty*, and our *Privilege*, to partake therein, and thereupon did earnestly covet and long after it, we should be glad to be admitted to it in any *Posture*, and, so we might joyn in the thing, submit readily to any *Gesture* to Receive it in. If any man refuse a *Present* of a thousand Pound, because it is brought to him in an homely Purse, that is coarse and much decay'd; or if he will throw back the conveyance of a fair *Estate*, because 'tis seal'd with a common Stamp, which wants a *Coat of Arms* to it: all the World would say he would not be so curious, if he stood in any great need of them. And if any Person should turn away from the most *swoury* and choicest meat, because it is dish'd up on *Peewee*, not on *Plate*; the By-standers would all conclude, that he is full enough already, and has no great edge of *Appetite*. And the case is just the same, when any of us shew niceness about the *Posture* of the Holy Sacrament. For did we really think we were in very great need of it, and had such an ardent desire, as that we might be said to hunger and thirst after it; we should be glad to have it in any *Posture*, as we could be allow'd to have it. So that

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altho' *Kneeling* were a *Gesture* whereto we were no ways obliged; nay, tho' it were justly to be disliked, not as *unlawful* indeed, but as *inconvenient*; yet, when the Sacrament is not otherwise to be had, there is no Man, who is duly desirous to receive the same, but will comply therewith. He had rather, it may be, Communicate *sitting* or *standing*, or after some other manner which he fancies better, were it left to his own liking, but yet, if he desires it in such measure as he ought, he will submit to receive *Kneeling*, rather than miss the opportunity, and not receive at all.

And this is the great thing, which I would urge upon all those, who are kept back by this Hindrance; namely, that although for its *own sake* they would not *chuse* it, yet for the *Sacraments sake*, which is not otherwise to be had, they would at least comply with the *Kneeling-Posture*. In my Judgment it is their *Duty* to *Kneel*, since their Governors require it; and the *Posture* is so *suited* to the Feast, that were it not required, they might have enough to justify themselves in making use of it: and if, upon the Reasons I have here given, they are convinced of those things that

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that clears the Case without more ado, and is the best Solution of it. But if their prejudices stick still after all, and in those Points they happen not to be of my mind, but think themselves free from any obligation to lawful Authority which appoints kneeling, and conceive that *sitting* is much better used: yet at least, since Kneeling may lawfully be used too, for the Blessed Sacraments sake, which, if they value it as they ought, they would gladly accept of, tho' in a Posture less convenient, let them *condescend* and *submit* to Kneel. Though they had rather receive sitting, when they may be allowed to do so; yet they may receive kneeling when there is a need to Kneel. And they must needs think it better to kneel to the Holy Communion, than, by stopping at a thing so innocent, tho' less significant, to be quite put by, and go without it.

But against this Compliance they may, perhaps, object, and it is the fairest thing which I know said against it, That they cannot comply with this *Injunction of Kneeling*, because it is cross to our *Saviours Institution*; for as he instituted the Holy Sacrament, so they think we ought to observe, and partake of it.

But to clear this Point, which I shall do as plainly as I can, because it seems to have some weight in it, I shall observe,

1. That *If using a Posture different from what our Saviour did in the Holy Communion & breaking his Institution, sitting no less than kneeling is a breach of it ; so that they and we are equally concerned to answer this argument.*

The Posture which our Saviour used, was neither sitting nor kneeling, but another different from them both. In the Passover 'tis plain he used lying or leaning down, which was the Banqueting Gesture of that time, when they used to eat at their Feasts lying upon Couches. And thus the Evangelist expresses it: *When Even was come, says St. Matthew, he sate down; so according to the Custom of these Countries we*

render it, but the word

(a) 'Ανέκλιτο.

is, he (a) lay down with the twelve, Mat. 26. 20.

And in the 21. of St. John's Gospel, St. John is said to have lean'd on Jesus's Breast at Supper, which though, as I observ'd, it be not spoke of the Passover, but of another Supper, which Jesus had two Days before, yet it shews the Table-Posture of those Days, when at Meals they lay one within another, v. 20. And this Posture in great like-

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lihood he continued to use at his own Supper; for they were both *Religious Feasts*, and there was no more Reason why it should be excluded from the one, than from the other. But if when he altered his Gesture, according to the Jewish Custom, at *giving Thanks*; he continued in that all the time of his own Supper, as some suppose; yet was not that either *kneeling* or *sitting*, but a *standing* Posture. So that the Gesture which our Saviour used, was as different from sitting, as it is from kneeling. And therefore if the use of one different from his be a breach of his Institution, it is equally broken on all sides, and one cannot urge it against another, but both are alike in Fault, and equally oblig'd to answer it.

And if any say, That albeit in sitting they do vary from the Posture which he used, yet is it still to another *Table-Gesture*, which is of the same Nature, and may be held Equivalent: I desire them to consider, that then they are plainly gone off, as well as we, from the *Example of our Lord*, and from the Mode which he used, *since*, whereas he lay along, they sit upright; and only stick to such a Gesture, as agrees to the Nature of the *Feast*, and to the



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Notion of the Communion being a *Supper* and a *Banquet*. So that their sitting, is not Authorized by our Lord's having used it at first, for that he never did; but by its being a Table-Gesture, which becomes a Feast, and is thereby suited to the Nature of the Holy Sacrament. And when once this Ground is admitted, it will make way for kneeling too, since there is much also in the Nature of the thing to render it very suitable and convenient. For, as upon the account of its being a *Feast*, whilst they direct their Eye to that, they may be embolden'd to sit down thereat: so also upon account of its being a most *Venerable* and *Religious Feast*, whereat all inward *Reverence* and *profound Humility* is required, they may see just Reason to use another more lowly Mode, and *kneel* when they Receive it. But if still they should think sitting the more agreeable Mode, and that, it being a Table-Gesture, a Supper is best suited thereby: yet would this be no Reason why they cannot comply with kneeling, but only why, if they were left to their own Liberty, they would not make choice of it. For though they would not chuse it, yet are they at Liberty for all that to for-

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bear sitting, and either to stand or lie, or kneel at a Feast when need requires that they should do so. So that whatever it may be to their own free choice of Kneeling, this can be no Hindrance to their submission and compliance with it.

But since both in *their* way and *ours*, the Gesture of our Lord, being now out of date thro the different usage of the World, is quite relinquished; for a full Vindication of them as well as of our selves in this Point, I observe,

2. That the Posture which he used, was no part of the Institution, so that the Institution is not broken when the Posture is altered: yea, neither it, nor any other Posture, has any Precept or Command at all for it; so that no Posture is necessary, but all, both theirs and ours, are still indifferent.

The Posture wherein it is first received, I say, is no part of the Institution of a Sacrament; so that the Institution is not broken when the Posture is altered. It is only the Thing which is appointed; but as for the Posture, or the Time, or the Place, or the Company, they are little matters that are unworthy of a particular appointment, and are left at Liberty to be order'd as mens Discretion

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tion shall judge most convenient. And, indeed, if the *Gesture* which our Lord used, were any part of the Institution of this Holy Feast, the *Time*, and *Place* and other *Circumstances* would be so too; for they seem all of equal weight, and were all equally used at first, which is all that the *Gesture* has to plead for its being a Part thereof. So that if it be a Part of the Institution to receive in the *leaning Posture*, because in his eating thereof our Lord used that Posture it is equally a Part of it, to receive after *Supper*, which is the time when he chose to eat his own *Supper*; and in an *upper Room*, which was the place wherein he Celebrated the same; and only with *men*, who were the Company whom he invited; and those no more than *twelve*, which was the Number he selected to sup with him. All these can plead the same Title for being Parts of the Institution, which the *Gesture* can, *i. e.* their being used at the first appointment of the Holy Sacrament, which is all the claim it can make thereto. And therefore since the *Time*, and *Place*, and *Number*, and *Persons* are no Part, but may be alter'd without any breach of the Institution, as 'tis on all hands concluded they may; the *Posture* is no part of it, but may

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ment also.

And to shew this more fully, it real-  
ly has been done in Sacraments, and  
that too in the Judgment of our Bles-  
sed Lord himself without any wrong to  
the Institution ; and that was in the  
*Jewish Passover*. For the Posture where-  
in it was first Celebrated, was in that  
of Travellers, with their *Loyns girt*, and  
their *Staves in their Hand*, and their *Shoes*  
*on their Feet* ; yea, and what makes this  
Circumstance more considerable in  
their Case, it was by *God's own Order*  
and Appointment. For thus shall you eat it,  
saith God, with your *Loyns girded*, and  
your *Shoes on your Feet*, and your *Staff* in  
your *Hand*, and you shall eat it in *haste*,  
it is the *Lord's Passover*, *Exod. 12. 11*. But  
afterwards, in compliance with the  
Course of Times, and the Custom of o-  
ther Countries, this *standing Posture* of  
Travellers was changed into the *lean-*  
*ing or discumbing Posture* of men at ease,  
which change our Saviour himself most  
evidently allowed, by his *own usage* and  
observance of it. For when he ate the  
*Passover* with his *Disciples*, it was not  
in the *travelling Posture* used at first, but  
in this *discumbing Posture*, which had been  
introduced since instead thereof. When  
Even

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Even was come Jesus sate,  
 † *Avéxeto.* or rather † lay down to  
 Supper with the twelve,  
 Mat. 26. 20.

Thus is the Posture which our Blessed Lord used in the Holy Sacrament, no part of the Institution, so that the Institution is not broken, when his Posture is alter'd. And if it had been any part of it, his *ly- ing* could no more be changed into *sitting*, because it is another *Table-Posture*; than the *Bread* and *Wine* can be changed in- to any other *Food* or *Liquor*, because they are a *Table-Furniture*. For the parts of the Blessed Sacrament must be kept the same as our Saviour left them, and we must not go about to alter and put in others instead of them, lest we be thought to cancel his, and to institute a *New Sa- crament* of our own.

Yea, neither it, nor any other Posture, has any Command at all for it; so that no Posture is necessary, but all, both theirs and ours, are still indifferent. It is not at all enjoyn'd by our Saviour Christ, for he only Commands the *Thing*, bidding them take *Bread* and eat it, and *Wine* and drink it, Mat. 26. 26, 27. and to do this in Remembrance of him, Lu. 22. 19. but says not a word prescribing the *Gesture*, *Time*, or other *Circumstances*, which they are

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are to use in so doing. Neither is it at all mentioned by *St. Paul*, who, as our Lord had done before, commands only after the mention of the *Bread*, that we should *do that in Remembrance of him*; and after the mention of the *Cup*, that we should *drink that in Remembrance of him*; but gives no Command at all concerning *Posture*, or any other such inconsiderable and outward thing, *1 Cor.* 11. 24, 25. And yet he delivered all that to them, which he had received in Command from Christ relating to the Holy Communion: *I have received of the Lord*, saith he, *that which I also have delivered unto you*, v. 23. So that altho' God has most strictly commanded the *receiving of the Holy Sacrament*, yet has he no where commanded any *Posture* to be used therein; and therefore *none of them is necessary but all*, both *theirs and ours*, are still indifferent.

Thus then is our *Kneeling Posture* at the Holy Communion, as also others *Standing* or *Sitting* where that is the Fashion, no *unlawful* thing, nor any *Breach of the Institution*, tho' our Saviour used a *different one*. The *Posture* which he Communicated in, was *no part of the Appointment*; so that there is no *Breach of his appointment when that Posture*

Posture is altered; and neither it, nor any other Posture has any Command for it; so that none of them are either necessary or unlawful upon this account, but all may still be used, either as *Publick Authority*, or in want thereof, as *Private Prudence*, and Love of Peace, shall determine us.

And as the Posture which was used at first, may be altered without any Breach of the Institution, or of any Law of Christ, and a New one lawfully brought in instead of it; so,

3ly. When a Posture different from that at the first Institution, was introduced in Sacraments, our Blessed Lord himself, and they themselves too, have submitted to it.

As for our Blessed Lord, the matter is plain of him in the Case of the Passover, which I have mentioned already. He found the Posture different from that, which was at first used in Egypt: for then, as I have noted, they stood like Travellers; but now they lay down, like Men at rest and ease. But since Common Usage and Publick Authority had altered the former Mode, and settled this later instead of it; he would not go to dispute it, but readily conformed himself to it. For when he came to eat the Passover, says St. Matthew, he sat,

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*sat, or rather lay down with the twelve,*  
Mat. 26. 20.

And as for *themselves*, they do the same thing too in Sitting, where that is the Posture, which Law or Custom has introduced among them. For *Sitting* is a Gesture very different from that which our Saviour used, who did not *sit*, but *lie down* at the Holy Sacrament. But when the *Assembly of Divines* had brought in this Mode amongst us, notwithstanding its being a Deviation from what was done at first, they did then comply with it, and would, it seems, adhere to that change, and do so still.

If they will be guided therefore, either by their *Saviour's Practice*, or by *their own*, in this Point; when *Use* and *Publick Authority* have settled any Posture of Communicating, they must submit to Receive in that Posture. The Gesture which they find now among us, is not more different from what our Saviour used, than the Gesture which he found in the *Passover*, was from that which the *Jews* had first used in *Egypt*: But yet he made no scruple of this Posture, so plainly novel and of a later date, but readily complied with it. In conformity to which *Example* the *Apostle* teaches us in *lesser things*, to make Com-  
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mon Usages our Rule, for the prevention of all *Disputes and Variance* ; —

*If any man seem to be contentious in the case of Womens being unvail'd in the Publick Assemblies, we have no such Custom, nor the Church of God, 1 Cor. 11. 16. And the Sitting which they think well of, is as different from our Saviour's Posture as Kneeling is ; but yet they readily embraced it, when once the Assembly had directed that it should be used. So that if they are but free to follow our Saviour's Practice and St. Paul's Rule in this Case ; or if they will go as far with the Churches Order, as formerly they did with the Assemblies : since Common Usage, and Publick Authority have settled Kneeling at the Holy Sacrament among us, they ought not to stick out, but to submit to it.*

And thus it appears, that their Compliance with our Use of *Kneeling* in the Holy Communion, is not at all against our Blessed Saviour's Institution ; so that the fear of wronging that, ought not to hinder any of them from Complying. It is, indeed, a different Posture from what our Lord first used ; but that be a Breach of his Institution, Sitting no less than Kneeling is a Breach of it ; so that they and we are equally concerned

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cerned to answer it. But in behalf of both 'tis easily answered, That the *Posture* which he used, was no Part of the Institution of the Blessed Sacrament; so that the Institution is not broken, when the *Posture* is altered. That neither it, nor any other *Posture*, has any Precept for it; so that none of them is necessary but all of them are indifferent and lawful to be used, according as Mens own private Judgment and Discretion, where they are left to that, shall direct, or as Publick Authority and Custom shall any where prescribe. And that when these have in any place introduced a *Posture* different from what he used, he himself, by his own Practice in this very case, and they too who make this Objection, by theirs, have taught us to comply therewith.

But against this Compliance it is by some still farther urged, That *Kneeling* in the Holy Sacrament is *Worshipping the Bread*, and a *Popish Rite*, and that therefore they dare not yield and conform to it.

Now in Answer to its being a worshipping the Bread; I would observe to them that there is no fear of that, because we do not kneel to the Bread, nor have any intention to worship it; and if really

really we did intend to worship the Bread, without which there is no Adoration paid to it, we should worship it whether we kneel or sit: so that as to this point of worshipping the Bread, their mode and ours are equally concerned, and it must be owned on all sides, that where that happens, not the Posture, but the Intention is to be blamed for it.

1. In kneeling at the Holy Sacrament, I say, there is no fear of worshipping the Bread, because we do not kneel to it, nor have any Intention to worship it. If we should kneel down to the Bread, indeed, and, submitting our selves before it, Pay Divine Honour and Homage to it; this were really to worship the Bread. And this the Papists plainly do in that Reverence, which they shew towards it. For they verily believe it to be Transubstantiated, i. e. that the substance of the Bread, after the words of Consecration, is passed into the Natural Body and Blood of Christ, which with his humane Soul has his Divinity hypostatically united to it: and upon this Belief, they fall down to it with a design to Reverence it, and to give as much Adoration to it, as they would to Christ himself were he visibly present. But altho' this be their intention, yet is it

it in no Case *ours* in kneeling at the Sacrament. For we kneel not to the Bread, to give any Homage and Adoration unto it, as our

\* Church has most expressly declared in the Rubrick; so that if any Persons intend any such thing, they must not say they follow the Church in that, since in the most earnest and express words it utterly disclaims, and warns us all against it. But we use kneeling to a quite different end, *viz.* only as it is a Reverential + Humble Posture, wherein we may very decently receive Gifts, and make Confession of our Sins, and give Thanks, and pour out our Prayers to Almighty God: so that our kneeling

not here; it being against the Truth of Christ's Natural Body to be at one time in more places than one. Rub. at the end of the Communion Service.

+ Which Order (of Kneeling) is well meant, for a signification of our Humble and Grateful acknowledgement of the benefits of Christ therein given to all worthy Receivers. Ibid.

\* It is hereby declar'd that thereby (*viz.* by kneeling) no Adoration is intended, or ought to be done, either unto the Sacramental Bread and Wine there bodily received, or unto any Corporeal presence of Christ's Natural Flesh and Blood. For the Sacramental Bread and Wine remain still in their Natural substances, and therefore may not be adored (for that were Idolatry, to be abhor'd of all faithful Christians). And the Natural Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ are in Heaven, and

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is only unto God, who is the proper object  
of our worship, but not at all to the  
*Bread*, which is never intended to be  
serv'd, nor receives any Homage or  
Submission by it. This, I say, is all we  
do in kneeling at the Holy Sacrament,  
as the *Church* requires, and as our own  
*Consciences* bear us witness, which are  
the only sure Judges in this case, since  
they alone do thoroughly understand,  
and are privy to our own Intents and  
Purposes. And when both our *Church*  
and we do thus openly profess, that we  
*kneel not to the Bread*, nor have any in-  
tention thereby to worship and submit  
our selves to it; there is none sure will  
be so rash and unchristianly Censorious,  
as to charge us with it. But if any do,  
they are thereby Guilty, not only of an  
*open uncharitableness*, in imputing the  
worst things to us without any just Cause,  
but also of great *Presumption* and high *Ar-  
rogance*, since therein they take upon them  
to teach us our own thoughts, and tell  
us our own Hearts and Intentions better  
than we can tell our selves.

2. If in kneeling at the Holy Sacrament  
we should have any such intention, without  
which there is no *Adoration* paid to the  
*Bread*, we should worship whether we kneel  
or sit; so that their Mode and ours are

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qually concerned in this doubt, and it must be own'd on all sides, that where such worship is paid to Bread, 'tis not the *Posture*, but the *Intention* which is to be blamed for it. For when we design worship to any Object, we can give it by a bare *inward Homage* and *submission of the mind*, without the help of any *outward act*; or, if we would make it a worship of the *Body* too, that may be done by *any Posture* wherein we design to express it. It may be done *sitting*, as well as in a more *humble mode*; for though that seem to shew more of *Familiarity* than *Respect*, yet has it sometimes been used for the *Posture of Worship*.

Thus the *Gentiles* worshipped their *Gods*, as \*

*Tertullian* tells us, —

the *Nations*, says he, worship their *Images sitting*.

And thus also the *Jews* sometimes worshipped

in their *Religious Feasts*, when they fed upon

their † *Sacrifices*: for so it was plainly in the

worship of the *Golden Calf*, where, after they

had offered their *Burnt-Offerings* and their *Peace-Offerings*, they sate down to eat and to

drink

\* Cum perinde faciant Nationes adoratis Sigillari-bus suis residen-do; vel propterea in nobis reprehendi meretur (viz. sitting at Prayers) quod apud Idola celebratur. *Tertul. de Orat. c. 12.*

† 1 Sam. 9. 13, 12.

*drink upon what they had offer'd* Exod. 32. 6. So that if any of those who *kneel*, are Guilty of worshipping the Bread, their *kneeling* must not be accused for it, since, when giving worship is their intention, they would be Guilty of the same thing if they *sate*. And therefore it is not the Posture, which were very commendable were it directed unto God, but the mis-applying it unto the Bread, and using it with that *irreligious intention*, which is to bear the blame thereof.

As for those then, who are afraid to *kneel at the Holy Sacrament*, for fear lest thereby with the *Papists* they should worship the Bread; my answer in brief is this. To worship the Bread, as the *Papists* do, is to kneel down to it, and to pay Divine Honour and Adoration to it, because they believe Christ bodily present therein; and this may be done in any posture, either sitting or kneeling, when any Persons intend such worship to the Bread; and without such intent, we do not worship the Bread by kneeling in the Holy Sacrament; and they are best able to tell themselves whether in Receiving they intend any such thing to the Bread or no; and if they say they do not, 'tis great Arrogance as well as Uncharitableness in others, to charge them therewith; and

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they have any such design, they must not say it is to comply with our Church, because it expressly declares against it, and warns them of the danger of it. If they worship the Bread, their kneeling, is no cause of that worship; and if they are so minded, they may use that Posture, only to confess their sins; and give Thanks, and make Prayers, by all which they worship God; and if still they will worship the Bread by kneeling, they go off from the Injunction of the Church, which would deter them from doing so. So that their Submission to the Church's Order in this Case, can put them in no danger of worshipping the Bread; and therefore in complying with her, they have no cause at all to be afraid of it.

And then as for this Kneeling in the Sacrament being a Popish Rite, if they mean that the Papists use it, they may call their own Sitting a Popish Rite too upon the same ground, because that also is sometimes used by them in receiving.

For the *Benedictin Monks*,

as \* *Didoclaerus*, a Zeal-  
 \* *Hodie in Cathedralibus Ecclesiis & Monasteriis Benedictinorum, in Die Cœnæ Domini ante Parasceuen, &c. Evangelium Joannis à Diacono publice prælegitur, & dulcissima illa colloquia Christi, quæ abiturus cum discipulis habuit, recitantur: interim ordine dispositis mensis, convivæ assident, panem a zymum frangentes, &c.*  
*Didoclav. Alt. Damasc. c. 10. p. 746.* U lous



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lous Assertor of the *sitting Mode*, has observ'd from *Bullinger*, sit at the Communion sometimes, yea, and the Pope himself at certain times doth so. For thus much *William Thomas*, an Eye-witness of it, in the year 1547, plainly te-

† *Quench-Coal*, p. 12.

\* *Summus Pontifex ad sedem ascendens, ibique confidens, universis cernentibus, majorem partem oblatae suscipit de Patina quam Subdiaconus apportaverat de Altari, ipsamque Dentibus subdividens, unam particulam ejus sumit, & aliam in Calicem mittit, &c. Durand. Ration. Divin. Offic. l. 4. c. 54. Nu. 4. p. 203.*

†—Imperator retrahens se ad partem dextram, stat usque quo Pontifex ad sedem eminentem communicaturus revertatur, quem Imperator sequitur, *Lib. Sac. Carem. S. Rom. Eccl. l. 1. sect. 5. c. 3. p. 59.*

stifies, as the † *Quench-Coal* says. And the same in his *History of Italy*, \* *Durandus* also clearly affirms: and likewise the † *Book of the Sacred Ceremonies* sufficiently intimates it in one Case, viz. at the *Coronation of the Emperors*. *Sitting and Kneeling* then are both equal as to this Point, that the *Papists* use them: but that need not make us throw them away as *Popish Rites*, or be any *Disparagement* to either of them. For the *Papists* have many harmless things, and many very

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good, as well as many bad among them. They have the *Scriptures*, which are nevertheless the *Word of God* because they read them; and the *Creed*, and the *Lord's Prayer*, which none of us will cast aside because they use them; and kneel at their *Prayers*, which yet we ought not to disclaim for fear of *symbolizing* with them: So that both *Sitting* and *Kneeling* may be good things among us, tho' both are used by them too.

But if by a *Popish Rite*, they mean that it is one of the *Corruptions of Popery*, whereby they have depraved *Christianity*; that is a great Mistake, which has no colour of Reason or Ground at all for it. For *Kneeling* is not only a very innocent, but a very decent Posture, wherein to receive *Gifts*, and make humble *Confession of our Sins*, and put up *Prayers* and *Supplications to Almighty God*; all which we are to do in the *Holy Sacrament*. It is probably a much more *Ancient Rite*, and either it, or some other Posture of *Reverence and Adoration*, which is of the same account with it, was used in the *Communion* long before *Popery*, i. e. the *Popish Errors and Corruptions*, which are a novel and upstart Religion, had any Footing.

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But then in further return to this exception, I must observe to them that on the other hand the way of *Sitting at the Holy Table*, which they contend for, is a *Socinian Rite*, which they first introduc'd into the *Protestant Churches*; and that in *Disrespect and Irreverence to Christ himself* whose *Death* is there set forth, to shew that *they held him for a mere man, and denied his God-head*. And on this account, when other Postures, as *standing or kneeling*, have been left indifferent in the *Holy Sacrament*, *sitting* has been particularly rejected and forbid by *Protestants* in *Detestation* of its having been first introduc'd among them by these men, and that upon so very impious and horrible a *Design*. As for *standing or kneeling*, says the *General Synod of Petrocov in Poland* held in the *Year of our Lord 1578*. *men may be at Liberty to use either, as they please.* † But as

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† Thus Synod. Gen. Petracoviensis, An. Dom. 1598, Mense Junio, Decree that the Posture of Receiving, should be either Stantes or Genuflectentes: And say of sitting, — Sessionis vero ad mensam Domini, quia præter Ritus in omnibus per Europam Evangelicis Ecclesiis vulgo consuetos, illi inter nos primi autores extiterunt, qui omnia temere in

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Ecclesia immutantes, & sine scientia Christum quasi imitantes, à nobis ad Arianismum perfidi Transfugæ facti sunt; quare hanc propriam ipsis (ut Christum, ita & Sacra ejus irreverenter tractantibus) & tanquam minus honestam ac religiosam, simplicioribusque admodum scandalosam Ceremoniam rejecimus.

So Synod Gen. Cracov. Anno. 1573. Art 6. which permits Ceremonies in the Sacrament to Christian Liberty—Monimur à patribus, ut qui Sessione in Sacra cœna utuntur, eam Ceremoniam quasi Ari-anobaptistis propriam relinquant.

for sitting at the Lord's Table, because that is contrary to the Rites commonly used in all the Protestant Churches throughout Europe; and because they were the first Authors and Introducers thereof among us, unskillfully pretending Christ's Example for the same, who as Treacherous Run-aways are fallen from us to the Arians: therefore we have rejected it, as proper to them, who distinguish themselves by their irreverent treatment, as of Christ himself, so also of his Holy Ordinances; and as a Ceremony less Decent, and Religious, and which is very apt to scandalize weak minds.

As for this Objection then against Complying with the Injunction of Kneeling in the Holy Sacrament, viz. its being a worshipping the Bread, and a Popish Rite;

U 3 there

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there is really no weight in it. For they cannot *worship the Bread* in complying with the Church, since it forbids them to worship it. Nor are they chargeable with any thing therein, that is truly and culpably *Popish*, tho' the *Papists* use the same Posture (as indeed they do sitting too, which yet is never the worse for their use thereof;) because kneeling at the Communion is none of the *Corruptions of Popery*, (as sitting among *Protestants* at first was of *Socinianism*) but either it, or some other Posture of *Adoration* which is of equal danger with it, as to the matter of worship, was in use in *Christianity* before the *Popish Errors* were introduced. So that altho' they cannot see Reason enough to desire this way, nor would Receive Kneeling, were another Posture allowed in Receiving; yet since the Sacrament is not otherwise to be had, they may very safely and wisely comply with it, and submit to it still.

And thus I have considered this *Impediment*, whereby many good Minds, who are sensible of the Duty of it, and are otherwise very well prepared for it, are yet unhappily kept back from the *Holy Sacrament*. And the Result of all is this, That when they stay away upon

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upon this account, because they will not kneel in receiving the same, they refrain upon a most unjustifiable Ground, which will afford them no *Excuse*, nor ought in any Reason to be their *Hinderance*. For *Kneeling* is really no *unsuitable*, but a very *decent Posture*; so that if we were left at *liberty* to receive how we would, we might have enough to *justify our selves* in making use of it. And it is appointed us by our *Governors*, whom God commands us to obey in all *lawful things*; so that in regard to their having *prescribed* it, every good *Man* among us ought to observe it. And if neither *Authority* could impose it, nor it had any *Reason* from it self to recommend it, but that *Sitting* were on all accounts much *fitter* to be used; yet since in their own account it may *lawfully* be used too, and is only as they conceive, a *less decent Mode*, but has no *Sin* or *Offence* in it; if they have any earnest desire for the *Sacrament*, which is not otherwise to be had, for *its sake* they will at least comply with *kneeling*. If they state things truly, since *Authority* has enjoined it, they will see themselves *obliged* to use it. But however, since their *Saviour* has laid no weight upon it, but accepts of a tru-



## CHAP VII.

### *Of some other Hinderances.*

#### The Contents.

*An Account of some other Hinderances. One abstains from the Holy Sacrament, because the day before he was at a Feast. Another because his Child is sick, or he himself is lightly indisposed. A third, because his Wife, or Husband cannot come along with him to joyn therein. A fourth, because he has a visit to make, or a Friend is come in, who in all civility must be attended. A fifth, because of a Shower of Rain, or a sharp Air abroad, so that he must endure a piercing Blast, or wet his Foot, to go out to it. These are no Excuse from it, but still Men are bound to Communicate.*

**H**AVING hitherto considered those *Pleas*, which seem to be of most weight in hindring Men from the Holy Sacrament, and possess them either with a *Scruple* that they dare not, or with an *important Reason* why they should not chuse to come to it; before I dismiss this Head, I shall take notice



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of some others, which, though of less moment, may yet seem fit to be considered.

Men oft-times give such Reasons for their Neglect of the Blessed Sacrament, as are Reasons to themselves for Neglecting nothing else that is of half that moment. *The unseasonableness of the Weather, the Sickness of a Child, the paying a Complement to a Friend, or the like,* is thought a sufficient Hinderance from the Communion : Whereas it would not hinder them from any Business, which either *Friendship, their own Pleasure, or their Profit* requires of them. For how cogent soever they may account them in keeping them back from it, they would not be with-held by them from pursuing any *Sport, or from driving an advantageous Bargain, or carrying on any End or Interest, or serving their Friend in any Business or Affairs of moment.* And can any Man now have the Face to give that for a Reason to Almighty God, which he would be ashamed to offer as a Reason to any one else ? Can he expect to excuse the Neglect of a *weighty Duty unto him,* by such trifling Apologies, as would not excuse the Neglect of a *Bargain, nay, nor of a Pastime to himself ; nor of a Concern of weight or,* perhaps,

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perhaps, of a *Complement* to his *Companions*? Those Men are surely in a sad Case, who are forced to seek shelter under such thin Pretences; and rather than make such trifling Pleas for any Act of Disobedience, it were by much their wiser course to be wholly silent, and not seek to defend themselves at all.

When these Pleas are made then, there is no Excuse in them. And indeed they would not be made by any men, if once they were convinced how much it is both their *Duty* and their *Interest* to come to the Holy Communion. For when they are detained by such frivolous Reasons, as would not either be urged, or admitted in excuse for any other Business; they shew only their great Indifference to it, and how they esteem it less than any other Matters: and this they could not do, if they held it either as a valuable Privilege, or as a Point of Conscience. The best way therefore to remove these Hinderances from the Sacrament, is to possess Men with a Belief that God has peremptorily enjoin'd them to partake in it, and that 'tis infinitely their own interest and high Privilege to be admitted to it. And having shew'd these very largely

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ly in the *Second Part*, I shall refer the *Reader* unto that, as a very likely way, not only to answer *these*, but also to prevent all other such like Pleas against it.

But that such Persons as are serious in these Hinderances, may not think themselves too much slighted, besides this general Answer, I shall say something to the *Particulars*.

1. One keeps away from the Holy Sacrament, because *the day before* either he himself has made a Feast, or has been treated by his Neighbour at a Noble Entertainment. But why, I pray, must this excuse it? For if at the Feast he was guilty of any incapacitating Offence, or any ways intemperate; 'tis not the Feast, but such Offence or Intemperance which is to be alledg'd for it. But if the Entertainment was Friendly in the Design, Temperate at the Table, and every way harmless and charitable, hurting no Man's Fame, nor disturbing any Man's Quiet in the Conversation; wherein was his Lord offended, or his Soul unfitted for this Holy Supper thereby? The *Primitive Christians* received it at a Friendly Treat, for in those days their Love Feasts always went along with it: so that an Hospitable Entertainment the day

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day before, yea or even the same day, doth not unfit Men to Communicate; but if in all things else they are duly qualified, they may worthily receive still.

2. Another abstains from this Holy Feast, because *his Child is sick*, or because *he has taken Cold himself*, or *has some aking in his Head*, or *is otherwise lightly indispos'd*.

But what if *his Child is sick*? Doth he attend it? Or is it advisable for him to be so far disturbed at his Child's illness, till his mind is unfit for those Religious Tempers, which he is to exercise at the Holy Sacrament? Perhaps his Child fares the worse, because of some Sin which he has committed; and will he not then instantly repent of his sins, and come to the Lord's Table, there to have his Pardon seal'd for the same, that so this Load may be taken off, and it may find ease by his coming? But whether that be so or no, if he has any sense of Religion, either in his *Child's* Case or in his *own*, he will be earnestly desirous to make God his *Physician*, and call out to him for help: and that he cannot do so effectually, or prevail in it so certainly at any other time, as I have shewed, as in the Holy

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Holy Sacrament. For God is never more enclined to hear us, nor are we ever more likely to have our Prayers granted for any thing that he sees fit for us, than when we send them up along with this Solemn Commemoration of our Saviour's Death, which is the only Argument that has Authority and Power with him, to obtain any thing on our behalf. So that if a wise Man longs to have his Child recovered, he cannot do a more unwise thing, than either to grieve so far till he is *unfitted* for this Holy Feast, or, when he might be fit for it, to neglect the same, since his Prayers there, would be a most *probable* and *prudent* course, to obtain it.

And then as for his *own indisposition*, if indeed it has brought upon him such *heaviness* as unfits him for any Spiritual Act, or if it is in that Degree, that 'tis not *safe* for him to stir abroad with it; God prefers *Natural* and *Essential Duties* before *Positive Institutions*, and *Mercy* before *Sacrifice*, so that it will be a just excuse for his staying away from the Holy Sacrament. But if it cannot hinder him from looking after business, and going among his Neighbours, or venturing out upon any appearance

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pearance of doing either himself or his Friend a kindness : why must it excuse him from attending upon God, and doing him this Service ; except that be thought sufficient to excuse our attendance upon him which excuses nothing else, which is a thing, I presume, they would be loth to own, who stay away by reason of this Hinderance.

3. *Some* again refrain the Holy Sacrament, because *their Wife, or Husband cannot bear them Company, and joyn with them in the Receipt thereof.* One of them is either *accidentally prevented* that they cannot, or *sinfully negligent* and *unprepared* that they will not come to it ; and therefore in Compliance, and for Companies sake, the other also keeps away at present, and defers it to another time when both may Receive together.

This I think is a *popular*, but 'tis a very *weak* excuse. For the Receiving the Communion is an indispensable Duty, concerning which every person must give account of *themselves* unto Almighty God ; so that one near Relation can no more talk of neglecting it for the others sake, than of neglecting to say their *Prayers* and *serve God*, because the other doth it not, or of being *irreligious*

*religious* to symbolize with some dear *Friends*, and *casting away* their *precious Souls* out of *Complement*. Nay, if he had not thus *enjoyed* us, but had only *Friendly invited* us to *Communicate*; yet would it be a very *rude* and *disob'iging* thing to refuse his *Invitation* upon this account, because some others who are very dear to us, have not either the *opportunity*, or *good manners* to accept thereof. For if an *Husband* or a *Wife* will not *Receive*, unless the *other* also will consent to *Receive* too; it is a sign they come not so much for their *Lord's*, as for *each others* sake, so that *they* and not their *Saviour* have the *Service* and the *Honour* of it: and this is an odd account for any man to give to *Christ* of his neglecting this *Holy Feast*, when he is most affectionately and earnestly invited to it.

When any *Persons* stay away from the *Sacrament* then, because they cannot have their *Bosom-Friend* to *joy* with them therein: they are guilty of a *great sin*, (since one is bound to it whether the other comes, or not,) and pass a *great affront* and *dishonour* upon their *Lord*; so that this is far from having any excuse in it. Nay, instead of being a *Reason* why they should abstain from

from it, the neglect of one dear Relation lays a greater obligation on the other to Communicate. For when one cannot come, so that there must be a defect on that part, that is *too much* already, since neither ought to be wanting in this Service; and therefore there is the more need that the other should Receive, not only thereby to shew their own Duty, but also to supply their Friend's defect as well as they can, and make amends for it.

4. A Fourth absents himself from this Holy Feast, because *that day he is to visit a Friend abroad, or has a Friend accidentally come in to Dine with him, who must in all Civility be attended.*

But why must our Respects to our Saviour and our other Friends be made thus to interfere, so that one must needs be a temptation to omit the other? How comes it that of all the days in the month we fix upon that for visiting or entertaining of our Friends, when our Blessed Lord invites us to his Table there to entertain us? Or if by accident a Friend then breaks in upon us, why must that detain us when Christ calls us? Is it any part of his friendship to make us disobey our Lord, or to put us by embracing this high honour



honour and most advantageous opportunity when 'tis graciously offer'd? Or if he be God's Friend too as well as ours, is it not very fit that he should go also and joyn with us? When to Communicate is a Duty in both of us, is it anywise Reasonable that he should make us stay away, and not go himself along with us? But if it happen that a Friend who is *unwilling* to *Communicate* falls in to be entertained, or a visit at that time would be expected: Since our Saviour and they cannot be attended too, which ought in Reason to be prefer'd? Is there any to whom we owe more Respect and Observance, than we do to Christ Jesus? Should we affect the Company, or Court the Conversation of any Person, more than his? Are there any who ought more highly to be valued by us, or have better deserv'd of us, or whom we should study more to make our Friend, than him who has gain'd us Eternal Life, and that by laying down his own Hearts Blood for the Purchase? When more *Honourable Persons*, or better Friends invite us, let us turn our backs upon his Table, and pay them Attendance. But since he can have no Competitors in this Case, where is the *Justice*, the *Honour* and *Respect* to him

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him, when this is given as the Reason of our Absence?

A Fifth neglects the Holy Sacrament, because of a Shower of Rain, or of a sharp Air abroad: so that he must, altho not much, prejudice or endanger his health; in which Case, as I said, God is willing to have mercy take place of Sacrifice, yet however, endure a piercing blast, or wet his Foot if he goes out for it.

But is he thus tender of himself in any other matters? And would these dreadful Scare-Crows put him by any other Concerns which fright him from this Ordinance? If they stood in the way of his *Pleasures*, would he refrain them? If they lay between him and his *worldly Interests*, would he be discouraged by them? If they met him in the way as he were going to *do his Friend a kindness*, would they cause him to turn back again? Tho' they would not *justify* it, yet when they hinder him from these and such like matters, they may with more colour be pleaded in excuse of his absence from the *Lord's Supper*. But are not men much at a Loss for excuses to shift off this Duty, when such as this, so full of palpable Contempt and a careless Spirit, must serve their turn, and be thought sufficient? And have  
not

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not we an hard task to *Conduct* them on to *Eternal happiness*, which must put them upon *Fighting* and *Striving*, and giving all *Diligence*, and *denying themselves*, and *taking up the Cross*, and *plucking out right Eyes*, and *cutting off right Hands*, &c. when they *stumble* thus at *Straws*, and are beat back by the force of every *Feather* which is blown in their *Faces*? and such trifles as these can discourage their going on in the most weighty *Duties*, and make them recoil again upon our *Hands*?

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CHAP.

## C H A P. VIII.

*Devotions fitted for the Holy Sacrament.*

## The Contents.

*A Meditation and Prayer, for the exciting, and exercising the Grace of Thankfulness in the Communicant. Another for the exercise of Charity. A Third for the exercise of Resignation to Gods Will. A Fourth for the exercise of Repentance. Some other Forms of Devotion, both at, and after Receiving. After we have received, we must be careful to make good those Holy Vows and Promises, which we made to God in the Holy Sacrament.*

**A**S for all these Excuses then, which careless men, who make no Conscience of the Holy Sacrament, give for their Absence from it, they will not stand them in any stead, nay, they are such as no wise man dare own, when once they are examined. They shew nothing else, but the disregard men have of Christ, their *unaffectedness* with all that he has done

done and suffered for them, their *absolute indifference* to have it remembred, and their *utter Contempt of this Duty*, which he has commanded them. They are a good Evidence of their own *careless, undutiful, and irreverent mind*, and manifest how little they set by their Blessed Lord; so that the urging of them is a ready way to give *more offence*, but not to make any *excuse* at all.

And thus I have done with all those *Pleas*, which are wont, I think, most generally to keep men from the Communion, and would be most apt to hinder those things, which I have said about the *Duty and Advantage* of it in the *second part*, from having their due effect upon them. Among these, there are some, perhaps, may seem to be *little objections*: but little as they are, they are an hinderance to some minds; and since it is not below them to stop at them, I am far from thinking it too trivial and low a thing for me to answer them. And upon the whole matter it appears, that to Communicate is a *great Duty*, and a *great Benefit*, and that none of those *Pleas* which are ordinarily urged for it, can in any just sort excuse mens neglect of the Blessed Sacrament. For neither their unworthiness to partake

partake of it, nor the danger of Damnation threatened to every unworthy Communicant, nor the Fear of breaking that promise of New Life which is made therein, nor the apprehended Difficulty and want of leisure to prepare for it, nor their being unenriched and unimproved by it, nor the want of that Charity which is to be profess'd as it, nor the having some Enemies, against all their Endeavours for Reconciliation, still unreconcil'd to them, nor the seeming Presumption in joyning in this Sacred Feast, nor the Customary Absence of many good People from it, nor the Admittance of unworthy Receivers to it, nor the Imposition of Kneeling at it: neither these, I say, nor any other Impediment whereby Men are apt to excuse it to their own Minds, can really justify and bear them out in absenting themselves from the Lord's Table, when they are invited to it. No ill Man can be excused, and no good Man need to be hindered by them. So that every Man, as he considers our Blessed Lord's Command, and his own Souls everlasting Interest, must be careful reverently and devoutly to partake in this Holy Feast, when he has an Opportunity, and is called so to do.

And

And now I have gone thro' all those Particulars, which I proposed at the beginning of this Book, and which I thought most proper to be insisted on, to engage Men to a worthy Reception of the Holy Sacrament. I have shewn what is the meaning of Eating and Drinking in this mysterious Feast, and wherein the Worthiness of doing it lies, and what strict Obligations we have to do so, and how great Benefits we are like to Receive by it, and answered those Pleas which are most generally given out to excuse the neglect thereof: and this with all honest Minds, who are desirous, and free to hear, and will have the patience to consider, may seem sufficient to enforce a due Attendance on it. And when once Men are so disposed, and seriously resolved to Communicate, I shall add a few things to assist them in a right Discharge of this Duty, and so conclude this Subject.

When we come to the Holy Sacrament, to commemorate the Death of our bleeding Lord, whose Body there is represented as broken, and his most precious Blood as shed, upon our account; we are to shew forth an affectionate and hearty Thankfulness for so invaluable a kindness, and entire Resignation of our selves

to his Use and Service, and true Repentance of all our Sins, fully purposing to amend them all thenceforwards, and an universal Peace and Charity towards all our Neighbours; all which we must excite in our own Souls by due Considerations.

I. We must shew forth an affectionate and hearty Thankfulness, for so invaluable a kindness. And what Soul can be slow to pay this, who considers how infinitely our dear Lord has deserved of us? For he has got us the most precious and glorious things, which Heaven it self could afford, viz. that all our sins should be freely pardoned, and that the Holy Ghost, that Immense, Eternal, and All sufficient Spirit, should come in at all times to our help, and that we should be in no less Quality than that of the Sons of God, and Heirs of a Kingdom, who are assured of Eternal Joys and Glories in another World. And ought not Gifts so august and superlatively excellent, to be most affectionately acknowledged? He has bought all these, to bestow upon us, at the dearest Rate, not only taking the most unwearied Pains, but also paying the highest Price, and laying down his own most precious Blood for the Purchase. And must not such astonishing kindness, which was affrighted by no Ha-



zards, nor stopt at any Difficulties, nor  
clined any Sufferings, not the Suffer-  
ing of Death it self, for our sakes, be  
always held in a most *thankful Remem-  
brance*? And in all this he had no ends  
of *his own* to serve of us, but was led on  
purely by the Pleasure which he takes  
in our Happiness. He was not won by  
*our Deserts*; for, alas! we were his pro-  
fess *Enemies*, who had nothing to shew  
but highest Provocations: he was not  
wearied out with the importunity of our  
*Intreaties*, for it came, as *undeserv'd*, so  
altogether *unask'd*, whatsoever he did  
for us: he was not moved by the Medi-  
ation of *Friends*; for whom, alas! had  
we to intercede for us? And shall not  
such *amazing Love and Goodness*, so frank-  
ly shew'd, without any Eye at *Self Ends*  
or *Private Interests*, without *Intreaties* or  
*Deserts*, nay, in spite of all *Discourage-  
ments* and highest Provocations, be enter-  
tain'd with greatest Joy and grateful Ac-  
clamations? He has been an infinitely en-  
dearing and intire Friend to us, without  
any Inducement but his own most gene-  
rous kindness, and against all *Discourage-  
ments*, and beyond all bounds, and under  
the most frightful Hazards, and at the  
highest Expences, giving his own Soule-  
ven to Death, for a Ransom to redeem

*ours.* And whensoever we hear or think of this, I am confident it will not be difficult for any of us to embrace him with Hearts full of *Love* and *holy Desires*, and to pay him most *intire Thanks*, and burst out into *Songs of Praise*, and find it a most *joyful Business* so to do.

What am I, my dear Lord, will a devout Mind then say, that thou shouldst leave the Right-hand of God, and come to visit me? Hadst thou no Ease in thy own Breast, so long as I lay plunged in Misery? And couldst not thou be Happy in Heaven, nor enjoy thy self amidst all the Joys and Glories of that Blissful Place, unless I were there to bear thee Company? How camest thou, being so highly exalted, and the Eternal Son of God, to have any Affectionate Concern at all for me? Was not I a deformed, polluted Wretch, and thy profest Enemy? And were not these enough, to turn away thy Face from me? But if, notwithstanding all this, thy overflowing Goodness would put thee upon doing something for my sake, why must thou come thy self upon the Earth, nay, come to bleed and die, to Redeem me? Am I dearer to thee, than thy own Life, that thou shouldst part with it to save me? Dost thou Love me better,

‘than thou lovest thy self, that thou wilt  
‘shed the last Drop of thy own Heart  
‘Bood to make me happy? Blessed Jesus!  
‘how unfathomable is thy Grace, and  
‘what an unsearchable Depth of Love  
‘is this, which thou hast opened to us,  
‘poor miserable sinners! O how hap-  
‘py do I think my self in it, and how  
‘doth my Heart rejoyce at the Remem-  
‘brance of it! Lord! I love thee dear-  
‘ly, and long to love thee more. I  
‘wish no greater Pleasure than to be  
‘found perfect in thy Love, and to have  
‘thee so dear unto me, that I can easily  
‘contemn all the gilded Vanities and  
‘Allurements of this World at the  
‘thoughts of thee? O! that I had the  
‘heart of the *Seraphim*, that I might be all  
‘over Love, and feel my Soul affected to  
‘that Degree, which I desire, and which  
‘thou, Holy Jesus hast infinitely deserved  
‘of me. But if that may not be, yet at least  
‘possess me, I pray thee, with such a Sense  
‘of thy Love, and with such Thankful-  
‘ness for all thy Favours, as is fit for me,  
‘and may in some sort be worthy of  
‘thee: tho should I offer the utmost Ac-  
‘knowledgments, which the most affect-  
‘ed and enlarged Heart can pay, I should  
‘not give thee the thousandth part of  
‘what I owe thee. Let all the holy  
‘and

and Elect Angels adore thy glorious Goodness, and let all the Sons of Men, so long as they have a Tongue to speak, set forth thy Noble Praise. For thou, O sweetest *Jesu*, art the Son of the Blessed, and the Joy and Glory of the World; thou art the Lamb of God, and the Saviour of Mankind, who wast slain for our sakes, and art alive again; and who sittest now forever at the Right-hand of Power, in the Glory of the Father, that Angels may submit to thee, and that all the World may Worship thee, sing of thee, and Praise thy Goodness, Power, and Glory, to all Eternity.

2. We must shew our selves reconciled to all those, who have any ways offended us, and that we are in Peace and Charity with all Persons. And this we shall not think much to do, if we consider how highly our dear Lord is concerned for them, and how earnestly he sues in their behalf; for then we shall be readily brought to it on his account, though we might be more averse to it on their own. He has loved them so well, as to shed his precious Blood for them; and can we find in our Hearts to hurt any Person, when we see him giving his own Life to save him? He owns them

as his *Friends* and *Brethren*; and is not that enough to make us kind, to see that he is so near *akin* to them? He has made them *Members* of his *Body*, and thereby *Parts* of his own self; and can we study *Revenge* against *them*, when *he* comes in at last to bear the stroke, and is wretch'd in so doing? He becomes a *Petitioner* to us in *their* behalf, and intreats us by virtue of all that he has done for us to be *Friends* again; and can we have the Face to deny him, who has so infinitely obliged us, and ought to command us in every thing? Shall we refuse so small a *Suit* to him, who died for us? or stick to throw away a sinful *Resentment* for his sake, who has parted with his own *Hearts* *Blood* for ours? Tho' they are most unworthy to be pardon'd, yet is he most worthy to have their *Pardon*; so that when he intreats for it, we must not be backward to grant it. Nay, we stand daily in a *thousand* times more need of *his* *Pardon*, than they do of *ours*; so that we block up the way to our own *Forgiveness*, if we refuse at his *Suit* to forgive them. For what if they have *injured* us? Have we been altogether innocent, and have offered him no *Injuries*? What if they have

have most *ungratefully* abused us, after they had received the most endearing Kindnesses at our Hands? Have we been duly thankful unto him, and never offended against all his Mercies? Do not we owe him † *Ten thousand Talents*? Whereas their Debt to us is but a Trifle of an *hundred Pence*? And since we are daily asking him the Forgiveness of these *vast Sums*, can we at the same time stick at his instance to remit these *smaller Matters* to our Neighbours? Have we the Face to ask Pardon, whilst we have not the Heart to grant it? Or can we hope that Christ should give it to us, for the most heinous Sins, at our Request; when we deny it to our Brother, for the smallest Trespasses, at his? Or rather, since he most frankly Forgives us, and that too without upbraiding us, shall not both our own *Necessity*, and the *Example of his Mercy*, engage us to Forgive our offending Neighbours also?

‘Lo! here, my Blessed Saviour, (will a Devout heart then say) how I cast by all angry Thoughts, and am Friends with all the World, as thou requirest, I should be! They shall all be dear to

me, because I see they are so to thee,  
who hast given thine own Life for  
their Ransom. Thou ownest them all  
as thy Brethren, and therefore they  
shall evermore be mine; for I desire  
to have the same Friends, and to go  
along with thee in every Relation. No  
Member of thine, whom I had never  
seen before, shall ever be a Stranger  
unto me, but I will embrace him as  
a part of my own Body. Nay, even  
my bitterest Enemies shall have no ha-  
tred, or hard usage at my hands, but  
I am Friends with all the World,  
since thou wilt have me to be Friends  
with them. Shall not I, O Lord, for-  
give other men, who am undone my  
self, unless I be forgiven? Shall not  
I have pity on their Souls, as thou,  
Blessed Jesus, hast on mine, and free-  
ly Pardon them, when thou becomest  
their Advocate, to sue and intercede  
for them? O! my Dearest Saviour, I  
do from my Heart forgive them, and  
will never yield to return their In-  
juries, or Unkindnesses upon them.  
Nay, I most humbly beseech thee, and  
that by thy own most precious Blood,  
that thou wouldest forgive them also.  
Give them Grace to Repent of what  
soever they have dane against thee, or  
against

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“against me, and impute not their Tref-  
“passes unto them, but receive them, I  
“earnestly intreat thee, into thy Favour,  
“as here I do truly and unfeignedly,  
“into mine. Hear me, O Blessed Jesu!  
“both for my self and them, that we  
“may be all one with thee, and among  
“our selves, being united to thee,  
“by a Spirit of Holiness, and to each  
“other by a Spirit of mutual Charity  
“and Brotherly kindness, that so all the  
“World may know we are thy Disciples,  
“by that Spirit of Love which thou hast  
“given us.

3. We must *Resign our selves up to our Saviour's use, and Repent truly of all our sins, promising him Faithfully that we will amend them all from that time.*

We must *Resign our selves up to our Sa-  
viour's use, that he may dispose of us as he  
pleases.* And what man can stick at this,  
who considers that he has bought us, and  
would put us to *no use*, but what is in-  
finitely for our own *Advantage*? Has any  
Person a better claim to us, than he who  
bought us with his Blood, and gave his  
own Life for the Purchase? Should not  
he have the Benefit of all our Service, who  
has paid so dear for it, by dying him-  
self in our stead? But if we were at Li-  
berty, and he had no power over us, is  
X 5 there



there any better way to dispose of our selves, or could we desire to be in other hands rather than in his? Can we hope for more Wisdom in any one to direct, or for more Power to bring our Happiness about, than in him who knows and governs all things? Durst we trust more to the Faithfulness and Affection of any Heart, than of that which died for us? Or can we think our selves Happier in any Hands than in his, who is in all things studious of our Advantage. For our Blessed Lord seeks no other ends by us, but our own Eternal Happiness; he imposes no Duties on our Consciences but what he has done himself before us, nay, what had we the understanding to discern it, we should all have impos'd upon our selves. So that in committing our selves to his Conduct, we do not give but seek a Benefit, and dispose of our selves in that way, which is incomparably our highest Interest. We are absolutely his own Right, and 'tis infinitely our own Interest to be wholly given up to him, and govern'd according to his liking; and therefore every considerate man will freely resign up his Heart to Christ, and never suffer the World, or his own Lusts to pull it back again.

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' Come then, my Dear and Rightful  
' Lord, will a poor Soul say, and take  
' Possession of me. Thou hast bought  
' me with thine own Blood, a strange  
' Price for so despicable a Purchase ; and  
' here I come in all Humility, to present  
' thee with what thou hast so dearly got,  
' and without all reserve to give up my  
' self unto thee. I know, O Lord, that  
' I am a Deformed, and Polluted Crea-  
' ture, most unworthy to be offer'd to  
' so excellent a Majesty. But gladly  
' would I be thine, that thou may'st make  
' me better, and so adorn me with thy  
' Grace, that I may be fitted for thy self,  
' and therefore I earnestly beseech thee  
' to accept of me. I humbly beg to be  
' delivered from my self, for I am my  
' own most mortal Enemy. O ! that  
' thou wouldest give thine Holy Spirit  
' Power over me, and not let my own  
' Corrupt will any longer govern me,  
' nor my false heart any more deceive  
' me, nor my unbridled Passions any  
' more to reign in me, which alas ! have  
' tyrannized too long already. O ! that  
' thou wouldst Purge my understanding  
' from all foolish Principles, and from all  
' darkness and Ignorance of Holy Things ;  
' and cure my will and affections of all  
' their stubbornness, and opposition to thy  
' Laws ;

‘Laws; Oh, that thou wouldest first  
‘take them as thine own Propriety,  
‘and then fit them for their Masters  
‘use, that I may never hereafter live  
‘to my self, but unto thy Glory: And  
‘wilt thou throw back a Soul, O dear  
‘Lord, that would hang it self upon  
‘thee? Wilt thou disdain an Heart,  
‘which is desirous of thee, and would  
‘fain be no longer its own, but thine,  
‘that thou mightest use it as it may  
‘best serve and honour thee? O Blef-  
‘sed Jesu! do not reject it, for it is  
‘the Purchase of thy own most Preci-  
‘ous Blood. Let not all that bethrown  
‘away, which thou hast already done  
‘for it, for want of thy further Care  
‘and Conduct thereof. Accept me,  
‘Good Lord, who here unfeignedly de-  
‘vote my self unto thee, that both  
‘my Soul and Body, and all I have, may  
‘be employed as thou seest fit to order  
‘me. I am nothing, I have nothing,  
‘and I desire nothing but to be with  
‘thee; to be filled with thy Grace, and  
‘to obey thee perfectly; that so I may  
‘have nothing of my self, but may do all  
‘things thro’ Christ dwelling in me.

And

And when we thus *Resign* our selves up to our Saviour's Use, we must heartily repent of all our Sins, faithfully promising never more to yield to them, but to amend them all for the time to come. To Repent particularly of all our Sins, we must first discover them, by taking some Catalogue of Christian Duties, and examining our own Hearts at every one Whether we have consented to transgress them? And where we find we have done so there we must bewoan our selves, and fully resolve, That if God will be pleased to pardon what is past, we will never yield to do the like again. And what man will not thus stedfastly resolve to leave all his Sins, who has the patience to consider what will be the *End of his Continuance* in them? For by that, we shall infinitely offend our dearest Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave his own Life for ours, and whom therefore we are bound to Please above all Persons? we shall certainly lose all the Joys of Heaven, and Eternal Happiness, a Loss which the whole World put together cannot recompence; we shall unavoidably be doomed to Hell Fire and Eternal Torments, which is the utmost heighth of Misery that can possibly befall us. This will infallibly be the Effect of our Perseverance,

*rance* and allowance of our selves in any Sins which we find our selves guilty of. And now let us ask our own Souls, Whether we love them so well, that we will *endure all this*, rather than *forego* them? Shall I prize my Sin to that degree, as for its sake to act despite to my dearest Lord, who died for me? Must it be dearer to me than his Love, that I should dishonour and offend him whensoever it bids me? Is this the Return which I have to make to my truest, dearest Friend, to side with his professed Enemy? Is this my Thankfulness for all his Kindness, to stick to a Lust which aims at nothing but my Destruction, rather than to him who gave his own Life to save mine? Thou lovest it dearly, O my Soul; but canst thou value it at such a Rate, as to part with Everlasting Life for it? Hadst thou rather have it, than enjoy the Face of God, and be for ever Happy? Art thou content, for the short and unsatisfying Pleasures which it affords, to lose all the Joys and Glories of a Blessed Eternity? Wilt thou die sooner than be divorced from it? and accompany it even into the Flames of Hell, and the midst of Eternal Torment? God forbid, will every Man say whose Heart

is

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is thus particularly posed thereupon, that ever I should be so desperately mad, and unaccountably wicked. I cannot *despite so dear a Lord*, nor *throw away the Eternal Joys of the Heavenly State*, nor *endure the most exquisite Smart of Hell*, and the *insupportable Load of Everlasting Torment*. No Man can bear it, and I stand amazed to think of it. And therefore since this will be the Effect of my wicked ways, and of my allowed continuance therein. I am resolved from this Moment to renounce them, and by the help of God will never return to them any more.

Thus let the *Drunkard* think with himself on his *Cups*, the *Swearer* on his *Oaths* and *Perjury*, the *unjust Man* on his *unlawful Gain*, the *Contentious*, on his *Quarrels*, the *unclean Person* on his *Fornication* and *forbidden Pleasures*, the *revengeful Man* on his *spiteful Carriage*, the *Slanderer*, and *Evil-speaker* on his *reproachful Words*, *Back-bitings*, and *Defamations*, and every other *Sinner* on his particular *Sins*. And when they seriously consider, that *this Saviour must be lost*, *this Happiness of Heaven forfeited*, and *this eternal Anguish and Extremity of pain endured*, if they allow themselves still to go on, and *persist in them*; they will instantly

ly resolve to forsake them, and never yield to be guilty of them again.

\* This may be used as a Penitential Confession of our Sins after Self-Examination.

dering all the

† This Sentence may be omitted, when this Confession is not before a Sacrament.

\* Here mention particular Sins.

† O Lord, have cried aloud to thee for Vengeance on me; and that cry would not be silenced, unless thou, my dearest Saviour, wouldst die instead of me. Of all these Offences I am guilty

\* O Blessed Lamb of God, who hast redeemed me with thy Blood, will every Contrite Heart then cry out, I am utterly shamed to look thee in the Face, considering all the cruel Usage which I have brought upon thee. † I scarce know how to think of Feasting on thy most precious Blood, now I am most earnestly invited to it, since mine own Sins have shed it. I am, alas! a most polluted Creature, who have daily offended both in Thought, Word, and Deed, against thy Divine Majesty. My \* Pride, and contempt of God, and my Sensual Lusts, and Covetous Desires, and uncharitable Practices, have cried aloud to thee for Vengeance on me; and that cry would not be silenced, unless thou, my dearest Saviour, wouldst die instead of me. Of all these Offences I am guilty

ty, and the horror of that Guilt would fright me from thee, were it not that thou freely callest me to accept of Mercy. I come, Lord, in obedience to thy Word, and with an humble and a penitent Heart, I earnestly entreat thee to have pity on me. I am sensible of these, and of the other Errors of my Life; and utterly ashamed that ever I committed them. I am weary of them, and fully purposed by thy Grace to become a New Man, or else I durst not ask to be forgiven. My Heart shall never more joyn with them, nor will I ever hereafter yield to live in such ungrateful, and wicked ways again. They nail'd thy tender Hands and Feet! O Blessed Jesu! to the accursed Tree, and thrust the Spear into thy Side; and can I then endure to see, or any longer side with them? They made God, who is the Author of all I have and hope to enjoy, to become my utter Enemy; and shall I then be still a Friend to them? They would bring me to Eternal Destruction both of Body and Soul; and whilst I consider this, is it possible that I should have any more to do with them? No, Blessed Lord, I hate them, and am utterly resolved from  
this



‘ this time forth for ever to abandon  
‘ them. They have been the Shame  
‘ of my Life, and are now the Sorrow  
‘ of my heart, as, alas ! when thou en-  
‘ duredst such Anguish for them on the  
‘ Cross, once they were of thine. I  
‘ I loath my self by reason of them,  
‘ and will never consent any more to  
‘ live in them ; and with an humble, and  
‘ a contrite Heart, I most humbly be-  
‘ seech my Heavenly Father, that thro’  
‘ the Merits of thy Blood I may be  
‘ forgiven. And wilt not thou, O God,  
‘ who sentest to seek after me whilst I  
‘ was an open Rebel, now meet me gra-  
‘ ciously, as thou didst the Prodigal Son,  
‘ when I return again to my Duty ?  
‘ Wilt not thou, my sweetest Saviour,  
‘ who diedst for me whilst I was thine  
‘ unrelenting Foe, now intercede for me,  
‘ when I come to serve thee ? O speak  
‘ Peace unto my Poor Heart, and let  
‘ me know and feel that thou forgiv-  
‘ est me ! Send thy Holy Spirit to take  
‘ possession of it, to keep it true unto  
‘ thy self, that it may never more start  
‘ back from thee. Thou hast promised  
‘ thy Grace to those that ask it, and  
‘ endeavour in expectation thereof. O !  
‘ I desire it, and will do what I can  
‘ in hopes to be thereby assisted in the  
‘ amend-

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' amendment of all my misdoings ; and  
' therefore I humbly hope, that this  
' Promise shall be made good unto thy  
' Servant. Whatsoever thou doest in  
' other things, deny me not this Grace,  
' O ! Heavenly Father, for Jesus's sake,  
' who is infinitely dear to thee, and  
' who died for me. *Amen.*

Thus may we *Discharge* the Duties of  
this Feast, and *excite* and *actuate* in our  
own minds that *Faith* and *Thankfulness*,  
and *Charity*, and *Resignation*, and *Repent-*  
*ance*, which are to render us *fit* and *wor-*  
*thy* of the same. If any are destitute of  
other helps, they may make use of these  
Meditations and Prayers to affect their  
own Hearts, and to shew forth these  
Virtues of worthy Receivers. They  
will not always find room for *all* these  
Devotions, whilst the Sacrament is Ad-  
ministring ; but they may go thro' with  
all of them before they come, for then  
they may allot what space of time they  
please for them, and make use of such  
of them as the time allows when they  
are Receiving. And for a more actual  
adorning of their Souls with them at  
that time, whilst the *Minister* himself,  
or *others* before them are Receiving, they  
may express them all in one *Continu-*

ed Devotion, by lifting up their Hearts, to God in the words following.

‘ **O** Blessed *Jesu*! who gavest thy self  
‘ to die for my sake; how near  
‘ have I lain to thy kind Heart, when the  
‘ precious Blood which streamed thence  
‘ was not so dear to it? I am utterly a-  
‘ shamed of my self, that ever I should  
‘ put thee to part with such a price, and  
‘ to endure such exceeding smart and tor-  
‘ tures to befriend me. I blush to think  
‘ of it, and abhor my sins, which brought  
‘ thee to suffer all this for my deliverance  
‘ from them. But since my need requi-  
‘ red, and thy boundless Love would  
‘ make thee undergo what thou didst, in  
‘ the utmost Thankfulness of an humble  
‘ heart, I gladly accept the inestimable  
‘ Benefit. For which I love thee most Af-  
‘ fectionately, and will serve thee most  
‘ Faithfully, and praise thee with Joyful  
‘ Lips, evermore extolling thy boundless  
‘ Goodness and Glorious Excellencies,  
‘ and endeavouring that all others may  
‘ do so too.

‘ Thou hast bought me with thy own  
‘ most precious Blood, O! merciful  
‘ Lord; and here with an unfeigned  
‘ Heart, I give up my Soul and Body, my  
‘ Worldly Goods, and all that I have,  
‘ to

‘to be employ’d in thy Service, and  
 ‘disposed of as thy providence shall or-  
 ‘der me. Take Possession of me by thy  
 ‘Spirit, that my Body may always be  
 ‘the Temple of the Holy Ghost ; and  
 ‘that my Soul and all its Faculties may  
 ‘be intirely Devoted to thy Behoof and  
 ‘Interest ; and that all my worldly goods  
 ‘may be acquired so innocently, and en-  
 ‘joyed so thankfully, and spent so tem-  
 ‘perately, and laid out so charitably, as  
 ‘becomes thy Faithful Steward. I will  
 ‘not henceforward call any things my  
 ‘own, when once my Lord has need of  
 ‘them ; but I freely resign all up unto  
 thee, since thou hast paid so dear for me.

‘I have grievously offended thee, O !

*\* Here name such  
 Sins, as you know  
 your selves most  
 guilty of.*

‘Father, by many sins  
 ‘particularly by \*, &c.  
 ‘I am perfectly a sham’d  
 ‘of them, and sorry at  
 ‘my heart now that e-  
 ‘ver I committed them, and would ne-  
 ‘ver do so were they to be done again,  
 ‘and I faithfully promise thee, that for  
 ‘the time to come, it shall be my sincere  
 ‘desire and care never more willingly  
 ‘to yield to them ; and I humbly beg,  
 ‘that for Christ’s sake, in whom thou of-  
 ‘ferest Pardon to every truly penitent  
 ‘Heart, thou wouldst forgive them.

’Thou

‘ Thou, O! Christ, hast purchased the  
‘ Holy Spirit, to help and strengthen all  
‘ those, who are ready to labour in an  
‘ Holy Life, and to joyn their own best  
‘ endeavours to his Divine assistances;  
‘ and dost most graciously offer him to  
‘ all such industrious Souls in this Holy  
‘ Sacrament. Lord, I do sincerely de-  
‘ sire to amend all these Sins, which I  
‘ have here with sorrow and shame ac-  
‘ knowledged before thee. I am fully  
‘ bent upon the amendment thereof, and  
‘ by thy help will endeavour what I can  
‘ towards it, and do humbly depend  
‘ upon thy Grace and Aid to carry me  
‘ thro’ therewith. Oh! Be it unto thy  
‘ Servant, according to thy word.

‘ I am at Peace, O Lord, with all Per-  
‘ sons, and forgive all those who have of-  
‘ fended against me, even as I expect For-  
‘ giveness of my own Offences at thy  
‘ Hands; and I am fully resolved by thy  
‘ Grace, to be kind to all the World, but  
‘ especially to all the Members of thy  
‘ Mystical Body, for thy sake, that by these  
‘ Returns of Charity I may in some sort  
‘ answer that infinite Love and Kindness  
‘ which I receive from thee.

Thy

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‘Thy Blood; O Blessed *Jesus*, has  
‘procured; and thou, Holy Father, for  
‘Christ’s sake, hast promised Pardon of  
‘Sins to all those who truly Repent of  
‘them; and the assistance of thy Holy  
‘Spirit, to every one who is sincerely  
‘ready to use his help and endeavour  
‘therewith; and Eternal Life to all such as  
‘are intirely Obedient to thy Holy Laws.  
‘And to show, that thou art still of the  
‘same mind, and wilt make all this good,  
‘thou graciously callest and earnestly  
‘invitest us to receive assurances there-  
‘of, in this Holy Sacrament. Lord, I  
‘heartily repent me of all my Sins, for  
‘Christ’s sake do thou pardon me. I am  
‘fully resolved to shew Care, and to  
‘labour in the Amendment of all mine  
‘Offences, let thy Grace and Holy Spi-  
‘rit come in to assist and enable me.  
‘I am stedfastly purposed to keep thy  
‘Holy Commandments, do thou O !  
‘then graciously accept me for the sake  
‘of my crucified Saviour, whose Death  
‘I now most thankfully commemo-  
‘rate, and who is here offered unto  
‘thee as our Atonement, on this Ta-  
‘ble.

Or

Or shorter, thus:

‘ **O** Blessed *Jesus*, who diedst for my  
 ‘ sake, and daily still renewest thy  
 ‘ Kindness, by shewing thy self well-  
 ‘ pleased with what thou hast done, and  
 ‘ calling me to meet thee in this joyful  
 ‘ Commemoration of it : I come at thy  
 ‘ Command, to shew my self humbly,  
 ‘ and thankfully mindful of so infinite  
 ‘ a Benefit. Blessed, yea for ever Bles-  
 ‘ sed be thy Love, which made thee  
 ‘ think upon me when I lay in misery;  
 ‘ nay, forget thy self, and throw away  
 ‘ thine own Life to save mine. I hum-  
 ‘ bly adore thy marvellous Goodness  
 ‘ which shall ever be the Joy and Praise,  
 ‘ the Wonder and Astonishment of Men  
 ‘ and Angels. And O! that I may al-  
 ‘ ways love thee better than I do my  
 ‘ Life, that so I may not flinch even to  
 ‘ die for thee, as thou hast done for me,  
 ‘ if ever thou shalt call me to it for thy  
 ‘ Glory! I see in this Bread that is bro-  
 ‘ ken, and in this Wine which is poured  
 ‘ out, what cruel Pains my Sins brought  
 ‘ to my dearest Lord,  
 ‘ \* and how they stand  
 ‘ guilty of his Body  
 ‘ and Blood. I come  
 with

\* Here name par-  
 ticulars.

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with shame and a troubled heart to confess it; I utterly abhor them for what they have done, and declare, since they have prov'd thy cruel Enemies, that they shall evermore be mine, and that I will never from this day admit of a Reconciliation with them. I am here to assure thee, O dear Saviour, that I will not live unto my self or them, but unto thee, and freely devote all I have to thy use, since thou hast bought and paid so dear for me. I love all Men, and will embrace them as my Brethren, because they are thine; and I do freely forgive all the World, even as I desire to be forgiven. O Holy Jesus, according to thy boundless Mercy accept of these small returns of thy poor Servant, which tho' very mean, alas! are yet the best I have to offer thee, and supply me, I humbly intreat thee, with a more abundant measure of thy grace, that I may be able to pay back something, which is more worthy of thee. Let this Holy Sacrament, O! Christ, be the Comfort & Refreshment of my Heart, conveying thy Pardon and Peace to it, and the Enriching and Establishing of my Spirit with all the Benefits of thy Blood. Make it a great increase of present Grace to me, and a certain pledge of Immortali-



ty, to assure me that I shall ever  
live with thee, and be near to that  
kind heart which died for me. Be it e-  
ven so for thine own sake, Blessed Je-  
su! *Amen.*

In these, or such like words, may we  
act over all those Virtues which are to  
render us worthy Communicants, before  
the *Holy Mysteries* are brought to us. And  
at the receipt of them, we may lift up  
our Hearts to God in these, or the like  
Expressions.

After the *Receiving of the Bread*, we  
may say to our dearest Lord with an Af-  
fectionate Heart,

**I** Receive this, O! my Lord, in re-  
membrance of thy Bloody Death,  
and Passion, and thank thee most in-  
tirely for laying down thine own Life  
for me. O! how do I rejoyce in thy  
marvellous Love, and in this Remem-  
brance of it! I will always live to thee,  
O! Sweetest Saviour, and do here ut-  
terly renounce every sin whereby I have  
most ungratefully pierced thy bleeding  
Heart, and am Friends with all the  
World for thy sake; and I will extol  
thy matchless Bounty whilst I have a  
Tongue to speak, giving all Honour,  
Glory, and Praise to thee the Lamb of  
God

God, who wast slain, and now sittest up-  
on the Throne for evermore.

And in like manner after the *receiving*  
of the Cup.

**T**HE Remembrance of thy Blood-  
shedding, O! sweetest Saviour,  
is dear to me; I can never forget it,  
since it was spilt for my sake, and I  
owe my very Life to it. In all the Af-  
fection of an infinitely obliged heart, I  
humbly thank thee, for what thou hast  
done and suffered for us, and gladly  
consent to those Terms of Life and Mer-  
cy which were purchased for us there-  
by; and by thy Grace, I will never will-  
fully yield henceforward to do any  
thing that is unworthy of so great and  
inestimable a Benefit, O! Blessed Jesu,  
I adore thy Love, and will ever Love  
thee above all things, and Love and  
embrace all my Brethren with open  
Arms for thy sake, yea, and Love my  
Enemies too; since thou requirest I  
should do so. And my Hearts desire is  
after this sort to fulfil thy will in all  
things, and most devoutly to adore thy  
Glorious Goodness, and to shew forth  
thy boundless Praise, to my Lifes end.

’ O ! keep me unalterable in this mind,  
’ *may a Devout Soul then go on,* and never  
’ suffer my own Corrupt Lusts to turn me  
’ from it. I have now, O ! Holy Savi-  
’ our, taken thee into my Heart. O let  
’ thy presence banish them away, that  
’ they may never pretend to it again,  
’ since now ’tis Holy to the Lord, nor ever  
’ appear to pollute that place, wherein so  
’ Divine a Guest is lodged. Now thou  
’ art pleas’d to enter under my Roof,  
’ have me always in thy keeping, for I am  
’ safe in no other hands. Preserve the  
’ place which thou hast taken possession of,  
’ and let not thy Enemies and mine any  
’ more invade it. Pour into my heart all  
’ the Benefits of thy Crucified Body and  
’ Blood, since now by thy wonderful  
’ Grace I am made Partaker of them.  
’ Thy Blood was shed for the Remission  
’ of sins : O ! let me know and feel that  
’ mine are all forgiven. It obtained the  
’ Assistance of thy Holy Spirit and Grace:  
’ O ! let me ever enjoy that as I stand in  
’ need of it. It was the price, which thou  
’ paid it down for Eternal Life : O ! let  
’ that finally be my Lot, since thou hast  
’ paid so dear for it. Bid me hope assured-  
’ ly, O Blessed Jesu ! that all this shall be  
’ made good unto thy Servant, because  
’ now thou hast given thy self to me, and  
’ fed

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'fed me with thine own Body, whereby  
'mayest thou ever dwell in me, and I in  
'thee. *Amen.*

And when this is done, whilst others  
are receiving, we may employ our selves  
in some of the *foregoing Devotions*; or,  
when we have enough of them, joyn  
heartily in the *Prayer*, which is made at  
the Delivery of the Bread and Wine to  
others; or strike in affectionately with  
the *Psalm of Praise*, which for the ease  
and exercise of all, but of those particu-  
larly who have already received, is  
wont at that time to be sung in many  
Places.

After this forthen may we lift up our  
Hearts to God, and discharge all those  
Duties, which are required in every wor-  
thy Communicant. When we have no  
other helps, we may acceptably express  
them all in a Devout Concurrence with  
the *Churches Prayers*, since  
in them, as I have \* *Part 1. Chap. 1*  
shewn, there is an actual  
exercise of all these Duties. But when  
we can do more, either by the help of  
*Books*, or of our own *invention*; we may  
act them over still more fully in these, or  
such like forms of Devotion.

And when all this is done, and this solemn Feast is concluded, we must not think the work of *worthy Receiving* is at an end. For one thing still remains, which must employ us always *afterwards*, and that is a *carefull performance of all those promises, which we made to God in this Holy Ordinance.*

In the Blessed Sacrament, as has been shew'd, we seek not only a Pardon for what is *past*, but also vow and promise Amendment for the *Future*. And these Promises must be made good afterwards, and it must be our care whilst we Live to fulfil them.

This we are *highly concerned to do*, and it will greatly increase our Guilt and Condemnation if we fall short of it. For if we return to our former sins again, after we have thus solemnly vow'd to forsake them, we are false to our Word, and treacherous where we seem to be most sincere, and seek more especially to be trusted. We break our Faith with God, and go about to delude his Expectation, had he been capable to be imposed upon and believed as we would have had him: which is as great an abuse, as we can well put upon him. And this *doubles* the sin which we commit, and sets God further off from being intreated; for now we have  
not

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not only the *Offence it self* to answer for, but also this *Perfidiousness*, and *breach of Vows*, which adds a new one to it, and makes it greater. So that after every Sacrament, if we still continue Impenitent, our Guilt is aggravated, and our Souls more endanger'd, and we are greater sinners than we were before.

Thus highly are we concerned to perform the Promises, which we made at the Table of our Lord.

And this we shall be *very like to do*, if we *think often of them every day*, for some time especially, *after we are gone from it*. Indeed, if we forget all we did, and all the Vows which we made there to Almighty God; we are like to be the same men still, and must not expect that it should amend us. For the Sacrament, as I have shewn, doth not better us without our own Care, but by helping and ingaging us to Good endeavours after it is over. It works not as a *Natural*, but as a *Moral* means, and improves none, but such as remember what they did thereat, and labour after their own Improvements. So that if we think all our work was done at Church, and fall into a careless and secure state of mind when we get home again: we shall be held still in the same sins, and the matter is not like

to be much mended with us by such Receiving. But if afterwards we frequently remember what we promised there; if we set our own Vows every day before our Eyes, and call to mind our own engagements: that remembrance will give them Force and make them have their effect upon us. For the thought of our having *promised*, and *solemnly undertook* for any Duties, is the readiest way to have them all *performed*.

To reap that Benefit then which God design'd, and which we expect by it; we must dwell much in our own Thoughts upon what passed there after the Feast is ended. We must maintain that Acquaintance with our Blessed Lord which then we begun, and look upon it, not as a *transient Act*, but as an *entrance on a lasting State*, which ever after we are to continue in. We must bethink our selves daily, that when last we were with our Saviour, we cut out work for our whole Lives, and in that hour made many promises, which thro' all the remainder of our days are most Religiously to be performed by us. This course will render it an Ordinance full of Grace and Heavenly Benefits, which will set us on mightily in our virtuous Attainments. And when we reap this profit by it, it will cure all our  
Indif-

Indifferency and Averſation to it, and make us run to it the next time with edge of Appetite, as we would to a moſt delicious and enlivening entertainment. We ſhall no more account it a fruitleſs work, when once we have taſted theſe ſweet and wholeſome effects of it ; but deſire to ſhare in it oftner, as it can be had, and bleſs the time that ever we came thereto.

FOR

The *End.*

Y 5 Heads



# HEADS OF SELF-EXAMINATION

FOR

The Use of those, who would  
find out what Sins they  
have to Repent of, either  
before a Sacrament, or at a-  
ny other Times.

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*The Particulars of Duty towards God  
and Men, as they are briefly summ'd  
up in the Church-Catechism.*

**M**Y Duty towards God is, to Be-  
lieve in him, i. e. to Believe the  
Holy Scriptures, which are his Word,  
taking all the Laws of Humility, Cha-  
rity,

*Heads of Self-Examination.* 511

riety, &c. there recited, for his Laws ; and the promises of Pardon and Happiness to the Penitent, &c. and the Threatnings of Eternal Death to all impenitent Sinners, &c. for his Promises and Threatnings, which he will see fulfilled upon us : To *Fear him*, as every man doth, who dare not do any Evil thing which he sees is offensive to him : To *Love him with all my heart*, &c. as those Persons do, who for his sake do every thing which he bids them : To *Worship him*, to *give him Thanks*, to *put my whole trust in him*, i. e. both in his Providence, for outward Supplies, as I need them ; in his Mercy, for Pardon of Sins, when I Repent of them ; and in his Spirit, for Grace and inward Aid, when I endeavour together with him : To *Call upon him*, to *Honour his Holy Name and his Word*, and to *Serve him truly all the days of my Life*.

My *Duty towards my Neighbour* is, to *Love him as my self*, or to *do to all Men as I would have them do to me* : To *Love*, Honour, and, when need is, Succour my Father and Mother : To *Honour and Obey the King*, and all that are put in Authority under him : To *Submit my self to all my Spiritual Pastors*, and all my Governours :

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nours: To shew Reverence to all my Bet-  
ters: To bear no Malice or Hatred in my  
Heart: To hurt no body by Word or Deed:  
To be True, and Just in all my Deal-  
ings: To keep my hands from Picking and  
Stealing, and my Tongue from Evil-Speaking,  
Lying and Slandering: To keep my Body in  
Temperance, Soberness and Chastity: Not  
to Covet other Mens Goods: To be Di-  
ligent in my own Calling, and do my Du-  
ty in that Relation, State, or way of  
Life, unto which it has pleas'd God to call  
me.

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*A Particular Enumeration of Sins,  
whether against God, our Neigh-  
bour, or our selves; taken out of  
the Measures of Christian Obedi-  
ence, which are all there explained  
in the Second Book.*

**S**ins against our selves, are Pride, i.  
e. too high a Conceit of our selves,  
and Contempt of others: *Arrogance,*  
i. e. Assuming too much to our selves,  
in setting off our own Praise: *Vain-  
glory,*

## Heads of Self-Examination. 513

glory, *i. e.* Intemperate Affectation of the Praise of others : *Ambition, i. e.* A restless Pursuit of Honour and Great Places : *Haughtiness*, in contemptuous, scornful Carriage : *Imperiousness, i. e.* A Lordly way of Behaviour, in commanding Men no way subject to us : *Worldliness, i. e.* An over-eager Care of Worldly things : *Gluttony, Voluptuousness, Drunkenness, Revelling, Incontinence, Lasciviousness, Filthy or Obscene Festings, Uncleaness, Sodomy, Effeminateness, Adultery, Fornication, Incest, Rape, Covetousness, i. e.* Unsatisfiedness with our own, and an impatient Desire of more, or of what belongs to others : *Refusing the Cross, i. e.* Deserting a Duty to avoid it : *Idleness, Sensuality, i. e.* An industrious Care to gratifie our Bodily Senses : *Carnality, i. e.* Subjection to our Fleshly Lusts and Appetites.

Sins against God, are, *Atheism, Denying Providence, Blasphemy, Superstition, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Foolishness* or gross Ignorance of our Duty, *Unbelief, Hating God, Want of Zeal, Distrusting him, Not Praying to him, Unthankfulness, Discontent in our present Condition* or *Repining at his Ordering, Fearlessness* or *Venturing*

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turing on any thing, tho' we know it will offend him; *Common Swearing, Perjury, Prophaneness, Disobedience.*

Sins against our Brethren at large, where are Sins of,

*Injustice*; as, *Murther, False-witness, Slander, i. e. Defaming them with False things, Lying, Unfaithfulness or Breach of Promise, Theft, Oppression, i. e. Wronging one who cannot cope with us in Contention, Extortion, or Depressing in Bargaining, Circumvention or going beyond our Brethren.*

*Uncharitableness*; as, *Wickedness, i. e. A Delight in doing Mischief, and making others work: Despising and Hating them that are Good, giving Scandal to Weak Brethren, i. e. Laying in their way an occasion of Sin: Envy, Rejoycing in Evil, Uncharitableness in Abuses: Suffering false stains to stick upon them, when 'tis in our power to vindicate them: Evil-speaking, or Divulging any Ill we hear or know by them: Censoriousness, i. e. A proneness to Blame or Condemn them: Back-biting, Whespering, Rayling, Upbraiding them with our Kindnesses, Reproaching them with their own Faults, Mocking them for their Infirmities, Difficully of Access, Affronting them,*  
Un-

## *Heads of Self-Examination.* 515

Uncourteousness, Uncondescension, Unhospitableness towards Strangers, Sarlinesse, Malignity, or putting the worst Sense on what is said or done by others: Unquietness, Unthankfulness, Anger, Variance, Bitterness, Clamour, Hatred and Malice, Implacableness or Difficulty in being appeased after any Offences: Revenge, or Returning Ill for Ill: Cursing Enemies, Hastiness and Rigour in exacting Punishments.

Discord; as, Unpeaceableness, Emulation or Provoking one another: Pragmaticalness or being Busy Bodies: Tale-bearing, Not satisfying for Injuries, Contentiousness, Division and Faction, Heresie, Schism, Tumult.

Sins against our Brethren in Particular Relations.

Sins against Sovereign Princes; as, Dishonour, Irreverence, Speaking Evil of Dignities, Refusing Tribute and Taxes, Traitorousness, Neglecting to Pray for Kings, Disobedience to them, Resistance and Rebellion.

Sins against Bishops and Ministers; as, Dishonour of them, especially for their Works sake: Irreverence, Not Providing for them: Sacrilege or taking away, either by Force or Fraud, those just Dues,

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Dues, which are given to God for their Support: *Not Praying for them*  
*Disobedience.*

Sins of Married Persons; as, *Unconcernedness in each others Condition, Not bearing each others Infirmities, Provoking each other, Estrangedness, Publishing each others Faults, Not Praying for each other, Jealousie.* Of the Husband against the Wife; as *Not maintaining her with convenient Supplies, Not protecting her from outward Annoyances, Imperiousness or a harsh and magisterial exercise of Commands: Uncompliance with her reasonable Desires, and Uncondescension to her Pitiabie Weaknesses.* Of the Wife against the Husband; as, *Dishonour in inward Esteem and Opinions, Irreverence in outward Carriage, Unobservance in not forecasting to do what may please him, Disobedience to his just Commands, Casting off his Toke, or Unsubjection*

Sins of Parents and Children; as, *Want of Natural Affection, Not praying for each other, Imprecation.* Of the Parents against the Children; as, *Not providing for them, Irreligious, and Evil Education, Provoking them to Anger by Imperious Harshness, and needless Severity*

## *Heads of Self-Examination.* 517

rity in Governing. Of the Children against the Parents ; as, Dishonour in their Minds, Irreverence in their Behaviour, Being asham'd of them, Mocking them, Speaking Evil of them, Stealing from them, Disobedience to their Lawful Commands, Contumacy or Casting off Subjection to them.

Sins of Brothers and Sisters ; as, Want of Natural Affection, Not providing for our Brethren, Not Praying for them, Praying against them.

Sins of Masters against their Servants ; as, Not maintaining them, Not Catechizing or Instructing them, Unequal Government, or Injustice shewn in requiring Unlawful, Wantonness in requiring Superfluous, and Rigour in requiring Unmerciful things of them: Immoderate Threatning, Imperiousness, or Contemptuous, haughty treating of them : Defrauding, or keeping back the Wages of the Hireling. Of Servants against their Masters, as, Dishonour, Irreverence, Publishing or aggravating their Master's Faults, Not clearing, when they can, his injured Reputation, Unfaithfulness in what he intrusts with them, shewn either by their Wastefulness, i. e. Spending it for their Pleasure ; or Purloining, i. e. Diverting it to their own Profit and secret Enrich-



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richment: *Disobedience, Non-observance, Answering again, Slothfulness, Eye-service, Resistance, Not praying for him, Praying against him.*

To all which, add two other Sins, which are peculiarly so among Christians, *viz. The Neglect of Baptism, and Absenting from the Lord's Supper.*

When we are desirous to discover all our Sins, that we may truly Repent of them, we may examine our own Hearts in all these Particulars, trying our selves either by the *former* Catalogue when we have less, or by this *latter* when we have more time, according to our own Discretion. We may ask our selves at every one, Whether we ever *mittingly* *relate* to it? and if we have, Whether since that time we have *amended* it? And noting all those whereof we stand guilty before God, affect our own Hearts with a sorrowful sense of what we have done, from such Considerations as are before laid down; and then renew our Vows, and make God our humble Confession, and Engagements that we will never have more to do with them. For which end, they who are not otherwise supplied, may make use of the *Devotion, p. 448.* which may serve as a *Penitential Prayer and Confession.*

A

## PRAYER

Before the

## SACRAMENT.

**O** Father of Mercies, who hast once given thy Son to die for me, and art now ready in the Holy Sacrament to offer him to me again, I humbly adore, but am utterly at a loss when I would duly prize so invaluable a Mercy. What am I, poor wretched Creature, that I should sit down to eat with my Blessed Lord, when the Glorious Angels do at a distance adore, and pay him Homage? Why should I be call'd to feed upon his Sacred Body and Blood, when my sins had a hand in all the miseries which he suffered, so that I deserve to be ranked among his Murderers, who were guilty of that horrid Fact, which nothing but the Blood they shed could ever expiate?

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expiate? But since it is thy Glorious Excellency, O Blessed Jesu! to love those that hate thee, and to save their Lives who barbarously took away thine, and accordingly to call to this Heavenly Feast so unworthy a Wretch as I am; I am ready to come at thy Command, but would fain come Worthily, and leave all my Sins behind me, seeing it is no Feast for them. O! I loath them, and would never yield to commit them, were they to do again; and humbly intreat my Heavenly Father, that for thy sake he would freely forgive me what is past, and rid me of them for the time to come. Slay them, Good Lord, for they have slain thee, and will slay me, too in time, if they are suffer'd to reign in me. Meet me in this Heavenly Banquet, with a full pardon of all mine Offences, and with a perfect Cure of all mine Infirmities and Spiritual Distempers, that I may be cleansed by thy Blood, and quickned by thy Spirit, and assured of that Eternal Life, which for thy sake God has promised to all his Elect ones.

All this thou art ready to do for me, O!

Holy

A Prayer before the Sacrament. 521

Holy Jesu if I come worthily. And therefore my humble Request is, That thou wouldst assist me acceptably to perform the Duties of this Heavenly Feast, that so I may enjoy all the Blessings of it, and feel it a Communion of thy very Body and Blood. I would gladly remember thy Dying Love with the most Devout Affections and with an heart that is full of Thanks, and intirely devoted to thy Service, and is quite weary of my Sins, and most desirous of thy Grace, and is thoroughly prepared to seal a lasting Covenant of Repentance and Reconciliation with thee, and with all my Neighbours? All this I desire to do, and to do it fervently: But alas! I cannot do it as I ought, unless thou, O! Blessed Saviour, wilt graciously come and help me. My Apprehensions of this amazing Love, are very low; O do thou exalt them. My Heart is still insensible of what thou hast done and suffered for me, and my Affections are dull and heavy; O do thou quicken and inflame them. Make me love thee as much as 'tis possible for my Heart to love any; and to desire thy Grace as highly, as I need it;

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it; and to be set against every Sin as irreconcilably, as there is just cause) or the same both for thy sake and for mine own; and to love all my Brethren as I am beloved that I may be fit to receive the abundant Communications of thy Grace in the approaching Sacrament? I earnestly ask, and humbly hope for all this, O good God, only because I infinitely need it; and because thy Grace is infinite, which will not suffer thee to see the Necessities of thy poor Servant unsupplied; and because unworthy as I am, I am still the Purchase of thy Son's most Precious Blood. O! then do not despise me for thine own Mercies, and for thy dear Son's sake; in whose Holy Name and Words I farther Pray as he hath taught me.

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

A

# Prayer and Thanksgiving

After the

## SACRAMENT.

**I** Thank thee most intirely, O ! my God, for calling me this day to thy own Table, to shew me how thine only Son freely died in my stead, and to assure me that now for his sake thou art tully Reconciled, and wilt live in me by thy Grace now at present, and raise me up to be Eternally happy with thy Self at last ; of all which thou hast given me the surest Pledges in his most precious Body and Blood. What can I render unto thee, Holy Father, or to thee my dearest Saviour, for so incomprehensible a Benefit ? I admire thy marvellous Love, and magnifie it above all things. Thy Praise shall ever be in my Mouth, and I will tell out thy wondrous

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drous works with Gladness. And may  
all hearts adore, and every Tongue con-  
fess, that thou, Holy Jesus, art the  
Saviour of the World, and the Son of  
the Father, whom Heaven and Earth  
must Honour, and call Blessed for e-  
vermore.

Pardon, O ! Good God, the unaf-  
fectedness of my dull Heart, in the re-  
ceipt of so inestimable a Treasure. And  
fill me with desires some way suitable to  
my needs, and to the richness of thy Mer-  
cies, that whensoever this Cup of Bles-  
sings shall again overflow, my Heart may  
run over with Joy and Thankfulness al-  
so. Let me never forget the Love which  
I have received, and the Peace which I  
have seal'd, and the Promises of New  
Life which I have made this Day ;  
but as thy Grace has help'd me to them,  
so keep me in a lively sense of them, and  
enable me always to fulfil the same to my  
Lives end. Now thou hast given me  
the Blood of Expiation, to shew me that  
we are Friends ; O ! never let me be  
guilty of any thing to break the Peace,  
which is now so solemnly ratified be-

1711

after the Sacrament. 525

twixt us. Now I have vow'd Obedience to thy Holy Laws, to be Humble, Chast, Temperate, Just, Charitable, Patient, Devout,

† and entirely resign'd to thy Holy Will and Pleasure ; O ! let me not

† Here mention  
Virtues particu-  
larly vow'd at the  
Lord's Table.

start back again from these Holy Promises for ever ! Now I have received my Blessed Lord, never suffer me to do any thing unworthy of him ; now I am Partaker of his Body and Blood, let his Holy Spirit go along with them, and then I shall be what I ought to be when I am in his keeping. My sins, which I have renounced, will return again, except he chase them away ; and my false Heart, which now seems fixt for God, will revolt, unless he establish it. O ! sweetest Saviour, let thy Body be my Food, thy Strength my Guard, thy Spirit my Life, and the sense of thy Favour my greatest Joy and Comfort. Go on graciously to accomplish what thou hast now begun in me, and let me ever be secure and happy in thy Custody. Be it even so, for thine own sake, Blessed Jesu !

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And



526 A Prayer and Thanksgiving

And then, where there is time for it, or afterwards, where there is not, may they go on, and say:

Give thy Grace, O Holy Jesu! to all the World, and let all who were Redeemed by thy Blood, acknowledge thee to be the Lord, and become thy Worshipers and Faithful Servants. Make all Christians Conscientious Practisers of that Holiness, which they profess. And above all, inspire them with uniting Principles and charitable Hearts, that by their loving one another, as thou hast loved us, all the World may know that they are thy Disciples. Let all Governours Rule with Wisdom and Justice, and all Subjects obey with Love and Chearfulness. Let the Priests of the Lord be Exemplary in their Lives, and Discreet, and Diligent in their Labours, having a most compassionate Love for Souls: and let the People be Humble and Towardly, most desirous to hearken to, and fully bent to follow wise Instructions. Be an help at hand to all that need and are afflicted. Send supplies to all that are in want, and assist them contentedly to depend

# An Evening Prayer

333

Blessed be thy Goodness, which has this day supplied us with Food, and Necessaries; and has preserved us in health, the chiefest of all outward Enjoyments; and has prosper'd the Work of our hands and lent us our Friends to be still a Support and Comfort to us. Adored be thy Love and Patience, which hast allowed us one day more to amend our ways, and assisted us by the Suggestions of thy Spirit, and thy gracious Providences, to make up that Resignation, Humility, Contentedness, Chastity, Sobriety, Meekness, Charity, and other Vertues, which are yet wanting in our own Souls. We desire to shew our selves duly sensible of these endearing Benefits, by learning to depend upon thy Providence, which has been so watchful over us; and to be contented with thy Orderings, which are so wisely fitted to our own Advantage; and applying all Opportunities to the encrease of that Righteousness and Holy Living, which thou requirest at our hands. We fain would do it, and are here sincerely resolved to endeavour it; and thou hast promised to aid all those who labour in so good

good a Work. Be it then, O Lord, unto thy Servants according to thy Word, and enable us by thy Grace and Holy Spirit so to do.

We are sensible, O God, how highly we have offended thee, altho' we stand thus indebted for all we have, or hope to enjoy, to thy Free Grace and Bounty. How many ways have we dishonoured our Profession, and revolted from the Vows which we made in Baptism, by Pride, and Envy, and Anger, and Discontent, and Evil-speaking, and serving divers Lusts, which then we utterly renounced, and promised never to live in again. We are heartily grieved and ashamed for these, and all other our Mis-doings, and are fully resolved by thy Grace hereafter to amend them. We unfeignedly Repent of them, and for Christ's sake humbly beg to be forgiven, and that thy Grace and Holy Spirit may rid us of them for the time to come. Our full purpose is to endeavour after a thorough amendment of our ways, and thy Promise is to help us therein: O let thine Arm be our Al-

mighty

## Morning Prayer

FOR A

## FAMILY.

**O** God, who art the Giver of all good Gifts, and the Father of Mercies, we thine unworthy Servants intirely desire to praise thy Name for all the Expressions of thy Bounty towards us. Blessed be thy Love, that gave thy Son to die for our Sins, to put us in a way of being happy, if we would obey thee; and after all our wilful Refusals of thy Grace, still hast patience with us, and hast added this one Day more to all we have mispent already, to see if we will finish the Work which thou hast set us to do, and fit our selves for Eternal Glory. Pardon, Good Lord, all our former Sins, and all our Abuses of thy Forbearance, for which now we are sorry at our

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Hearts;

Hearts ; and give us Grace to lead more Holy Lives, and to be more careful in improving all future Opportunities. Make thy self present to our Minds, and let thy Love and Fear rule in our Souls, in all those Places and Companies, where our Occasions shall lead us this Day. Keep us Chast in all our Thoughts, Temperate in all our Enjoyments, Humble in all our Opinions of our selves, Charitable in all our Speeches of others, Meek and Peaceable under all Provocations, Sincere and Faithful in all our Professions, and so Just and Upright in all our Dealings, that no Necessity may force, nor Opportunity in any kind allure us, to defraud or go beyond our Neighbours. When thou bestowest Good on others, let not us envy, but rejoice in it ; and when thou addest any to our selves, let us own thy Mercy and humbly thank thee for it. Afford us convenient Supplies in all our reasonable Necessities, and protect us against the approach of all Dangers. Make us diligent in all our Business, and give such Success to our Honest Endeavours,

as thou see'st most expedient for us; and teach us contentedly to submit, and not to repine at any thing that happens to us by the Allotment of thy wise Providence. In all our Passage thro' this World, and our manifold Concerns therein, suffer not our Hearts to be too much set upon it; but alxays fix our Eye upon the Blessed Hope, that as we go along we may make all the Things of this World to minister to it, and be careful above all things to fit our Souls for that pure and perfect Bliss, which thou hast prepared for all who Love and Fear thee, in the Glories of thy Kingdom.

Extend thy Grace, we farther beseech thee, to all Men, in all Places; especially to the Governours and Subjects, to all both High and Low, Rich and Poor, who pray for it, or need it, in these Kingdoms. Bless all our Relations, who are near us in the Flesh, and all our Friends and Benefactors, who are endeared to us by their Kindnesses. Forgive all our Enemies, give them Hearts to fear thee, and to be kind to us. And supply all us, and all others.

# An Evening Prayer

153

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good a Work. Be it then, O Lord, un-  
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and enable us by thy Grace and Holy Spi-  
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our ways, and thy Promise is to help  
therein: O let thine Arm be our

help, and thy mighty Arm be our strength.



mighty Aid, and then we shall return to them no more.

Keep us under the defence and care of thy good Providence this Night; make our Sleep safe, and refreshing to us. Fit us for our great change, that it may not surprize us unawares, but that having led holy Lives, we may be happy in our Deaths, and have Comfort and well grounded hope in thee.

Give all men Grace to Repent of all their Sins, and to become thy faithful Servants. Let all Christians live up to the Laws of that Religion, which they profess. Especially Bless these Kingdoms wherein we live. Let our Governors Rule with Justice, and our People Obey with Chearfulness. Make the Rich and Prosperous, to shew themselves Temperate in using, and Charitable in Distributing of their Substances, and the Poor and Afflicted, to be Patient and Contented under their Burdens. And cause us all, to Love as Brethren, and to be Pitiful and Tender hearted towards all Men. Preserve our Friends, in their Souls and Bodies; Forgive

*Forgive our Enemies, and make them kindly affected towards us : And do whatsoever thou seest fitting for us all, for the sake of thy Son, our Advocate and only Saviour Jesus Christ, who has taught us in his own words thus to Pray.*

*Our Father, &c.*

## FINIS.

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